

# SAFETY GUIDELINES AND OPERATING PROCEDURES



Sea Kayak Club WA Inc.



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## 1.0 PREAMBLE

### 1.1 DISCLAIMER

The information in this document has been compiled in compliance with Paddle Australia Limited. Safety Guidelines as at June 2012 which define the minimum standards for the conduct of safe non-competitive canoeing and kayaking activities. The information in these guidelines is of a general nature only and is not intended to be relied upon as, nor as a substitute for, specific qualified or professional advice. No responsibility for the loss occasioned to any person acting on or refraining from action as a result of any material in these guidelines can be accepted.

### 1.2 RISK WARNING

**Sea kayaking is a high risk recreational activity** which can expose participants to known, unknown or unanticipated hazards and risks that could result in physical or emotional injury and, in extreme cases, death. It could also result in damage to a participant's own property or the property of others. Such risks cannot be eliminated or completely controlled and are to some extent essential qualities of this adventure activity, taking place, as it does, on open waters subject to the vagaries and forces of nature.

Sea Kayak Club WA Inc. is an organisation that provides and coordinates a variety of sea kayaking activities for its members with emphasis on safety and minimization of the hazards and risks discussed above. The club enables like minded individuals to take part in these activities in a supportive group environment, to share their accumulated skills and experience and provide support and assistance to new paddlers. Club activities take place within guidelines laid out in the club's operating policies and procedures. The club's members, officers and volunteers are not professionally qualified and act in a voluntary capacity utilizing their skills, knowledge and experience in good faith. However, those taking part in club activities or acting in accordance with club policies and procedures or on the advice of a club member or officer do so at their own risk.

Club Sea Leaders, Instructors and more experienced club members will give an indication of the expected conditions and risks associated with each club activity and the skills, experience and equipment required of a participating paddler, according to the club trip/paddler grading system. This advice is given in good faith utilizing their own knowledge and experience to assess available information on weather and sea conditions, the course to be paddled, known or anticipated hazards and any other relevant data available.

The individual participants in a club activity are best able to make a completely informed assessment of their own current fitness, health, mental condition, skill, experience and personal equipment at any given time and to evaluate any recent changes in those factors. It is the duty of each participant to assess the information and advice provided and use it as a guideline to make their own decision as to whether or not their skills and experience will enable them to take part in an activity without increasing the level of risk to themselves or other participants. Members must err on the side of caution if there is any doubt about their ability to take part in an activity and seek clarification or advice from Sea Leaders, Instructors and experienced peer paddlers when necessary.

A Sea Leader or peer group of paddlers may advise an intending trip participant not to take part in a particular activity, or refuse to allow them to take part in an activity, if they have good reason to believe that the participant has not honestly assessed his/her ability to take part or does not have the experience, knowledge or skills to assess his/her ability to take part. The participant must accept that this action is taken in his/her own best interests and in the best interests of the group. A Sea Leader, Instructor or peer group of paddlers may cancel or modify a club activity at their discretion where not to do so could raise the risks involved to an unacceptable level.

**There is no such thing as a completely safe kayaking activity**, even trips on protected waters such as estuaries, lakes and rivers can become demanding and hazardous in adverse weather conditions. Novice paddlers in particular need to be aware of this. **Weather and sea conditions can deteriorate rapidly and without warning. Winds can be forty percent stronger and waves double the height of official forecast averages.** Very strong wind gusts and larger than average waves can occur without warning. Conditions can be misjudged. Members must take these factors into consideration when making decisions as to whether or not to participate in club activities.

### **1.3 INTRODUCTION**

Sea Kayak Club WA Inc. provides and coordinates a variety of recreational sea kayaking activities for its members with emphasis on safety and minimization of the hazards and risks that are to some extent inherent in this adventure pastime. The club enables like minded individuals to take part in these activities in a supportive group environment, to share their accumulated skills and experience and to provide support and assistance to new paddlers. Club activities take place within guidelines defined in the club's Operating Policies and Procedures and Objects of Association as defined in its constitution.

It has become increasingly important to examine the real and potential hazards and risks associated with the club's activities and define areas in which management practices can be put in place to identify, eliminate, control and minimize the impact of those hazards and risks to members safety. Such is the purpose of these Safety Guidelines and Operating Procedures.

These Safety Guidelines and Operating Procedures define the terms under which members may participate in club on water activities and will assist them in assessing the risks associated with a chosen activity on a particular day in the expected sea and weather conditions. The guidelines will enable them to make informed personal decisions when assessing their ability to participate in such an activity and avoid exposing themselves or others to unacceptable levels of risk. The decision to participate rests with the individual and emphasis is placed on self-assessment and members accepting responsibility for their own actions.

### **1.4 OBJECTS OF ASSOCIATION**

- To unite and co-ordinate members in their sea kayaking activities.
- To promote and encourage sea kayaking to the general community as an enjoyable, social and environmentally responsible wilderness pursuit.
- To promote safe boating practices, and endeavour to make sure that the Rules and Regulations concerning Sea Kayaking (if any) are complied with.
- To encourage respect for our environment, and to foster a positive attitude toward the conservation of flora and fauna, and the practice of minimum impact camping.
- To act on behalf of members in their relationship with Paddle WA Inc. and other organisations.
- To represent sea kayakers in consultations with government departments at all levels.

### **1.5 DEFINITIONS**

<b>SKCWA</b>	- Means Sea Kayak Club WA Inc.
<b>PWA</b>	- Means Paddle WA. (Inc). ( the peak body for canoeing in WA, affiliated with PA)
<b>PA</b>	- Means Paddle Australia Ltd. ( the peak national canoeing body in Australia)
<b>PAQS</b>	- Means Paddle Australia Qualification Scheme.

**SEA LEADER**- A club member holding an PAQS - Sea Leader Award qualification, or Club Sea Leader judged by a qualified Assessor to be at an equivalent level, and who has the necessary experience to organize and co-ordinate a group of participants on a scheduled SKCWA activity without the intention of imparting skills or knowledge beyond that which is necessary for members to participate adequately and as safely as possible in that particular activity. Refer to Sec 3.1.4 for further explanation of a Sea Leader's responsibilities.

**INSTRUCTOR** - An individual holding a PAQS - Sea Instructor Level 2 or 3 award qualification, who facilitates skill transfer or development to participants in order that they may attain award qualification and engage safely and adequately in scheduled SKCWA activities according to their level of skill and knowledge and with minimal supervision.

**PARTICIPANT** - A club member who has the necessary skills, knowledge, PAQS award qualification and experience to participate safely and adequately in a scheduled SKCWA activity.

**ACTIVITY** - A programmed and/or officially sanctioned SKCWA paddling trip or training session.

**PEER ACTIVITY** - A paddling activity in which all participants will be experienced paddlers with PAQS qualifications and sea skills and experience relevant to the chosen activity for which there may not be any nominated leadership structure. Participants will be responsible for their own actions and decisions and will be prepared to actively contribute to trip and group safety decision making.

## 2.0 EQUIPMENT

### 2.1 KAYAKS

Kayaks suitable for use on Club activities must have the following features:

- May be single or double sea kayaks.
- Have a minimum overall length of 4.5 metres
- An enclosed minimum volume cockpit in which the paddler sits.
- Watertight compartments or some form of buoyancy sufficient to keep the boat horizontally afloat if swamped.
- A cockpit rim to which a spray skirt can be fitted.
- Be reasonably stable and able to be effectively manoeuvred in rough seas.
- Of a design and strength such that it is able to resist the stresses imposed by rough seas.
- Cockpit design to allow for unrestricted wet exit in the event of a capsize.
- Be capable of being towed.
- Able to be securely grasped by hand.
- Be of a colour that is clearly visible to other craft and rescue services.
- Foot pegs and rudder pedals must be of a type that will not allow the feet to be trapped when exiting the kayak.

While this is not an exact definition of a 'sea kayak' it provides some guidance as to which boats can be used on Club activities. Sea Leaders and Instructors can use their own judgment when assessing the suitability of 'borderline' cases.

The following watercraft cannot be used on Club activities:

- 'Sit-on-tops' e.g. surf skis, wave skis, cross trainers.
- Estuary or river kayaks suitable for use on calm water only.
- Open canoes e.g. Canadian canoes.
- Inflatable kayaks (excluding folding kayaks that have inflatable sponsons).
- Hybrid canoes or kayaks used for multi-sport events or flat-water racing.

### 2.2 KAYAK FIT-OUTS

**Kayaks to be used by participants in club activities must be fitted out as follows.**

- Fit-outs** - These are permanent or semi-permanent features or modifications made to a kayak to make it comply with club standards and individual owner requirements.
- Grab handles** - These must be fitted to the bow and stern of the boat. Hand loops must not allow full insertion of the hand into the loop such that the hand or fingers can be trapped if the handle is twisted should the kayak roll in broken water..
- Deck-lines** - Lines must go around the deck perimeter in front of and behind the cockpit or around the entire perimeter of the deck such that they provide handholds for the full length of both sides of the kayak. Deck-line cord must be a minimum diameter of 6mm.
- Towing points** - Quick release tow points such as cam cleats should be fitted to enable towing of other kayaks in an emergency. Alternatively, quick-release harnesses or quick-release tow belts may be used.
- A tow point must be located at or near the bow of the kayak to enable it to be towed if necessary, an additional tow point at the stern is also strongly recommended (the bow and stern grab handles may be used for this purpose if they are suitable).
- Pump** - The paddler must be able to evacuate the cockpit of water while maintaining control of the craft. Thus, pumps must be of a type that can be operated hands-free (i.e. foot or electrical battery operated) so that the spray deck can be secured in place and the paddler can continue to paddle while water is evacuated from the cockpit. A portable hand pump is suitable as a back-up only. All pumps, but electrically operated pump systems in particular, must be checked for correct operation and condition and serviced regularly.

## **2.3 SAFETY AND PERSONAL EQUIPMENT**

### **2.3.1 WA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT – COMPULSORY EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS.**

**1) Protected Waters** – including lakes, rivers, estuaries and boat harbors.

- No requirements, but a life jacket to Level 50 or 50S (AS 4758, formerly known as PFD Type 2 and PFD Type 3) is recommended to be worn.

**2) Unprotected waters** – within 400m of the mainland shore.

- As for protected waters.

**3) Unprotected waters** – between 400m and 2 nautical miles (3.7 km) of the mainland shore.

- Life jacket to Level 50 or 50S (AS 4758, former PFD Types 2 and 3) must be worn.
- Bilge pump or bailer.
- Inshore flare kit consisting of two hand held red flares to AS2092 or 2 parachute flares, and two hand held orange smoke signals to AS2092 or 1 orange smoke canister; OR an EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon); OR a PLB (Personal Locator Beacon). Note that the PLB must be securely attached to a person on board the kayak.

**4) Unprotected Waters** – between 2 and 5 nautical miles (3.7 and 9.3 km) of the mainland shore or more than 400 metres from an island located more than 2 nautical miles (3.7 km) from the mainland shore.

- Life jacket to Level 50 or 50S (AS 4758, former PFD Types 2 and 3) must be worn.
- Bilge pump or bailer.
- An EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon); OR a PLB (Personal Locator Beacon). Note that the PLB must be securely attached to a person on board the kayak.
- Inshore flare kit is recommended

**5) Unprotected Waters** - over 5 nautical miles (9.3 km) from the mainland shore or more than one nautical mile from an island located more than 5 nautical miles (9.3 km) from the mainland shore.

- Life jacket to Level 50 or 50S (AS 4758, former PFD Types 2 and 3) must be worn.
- Bilge pump or bailer.
- An EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon); OR a PLB (Personal Locator Beacon). Note that the PLB must be securely attached to a person on board the kayak.
- A VHF or 27 MHz marine radio.
- Offshore flare kit consisting of two parachute flares (hand-held red flares are not sufficient), and two hand held orange smoke signals to AS2092 or 1 orange smoke canister.

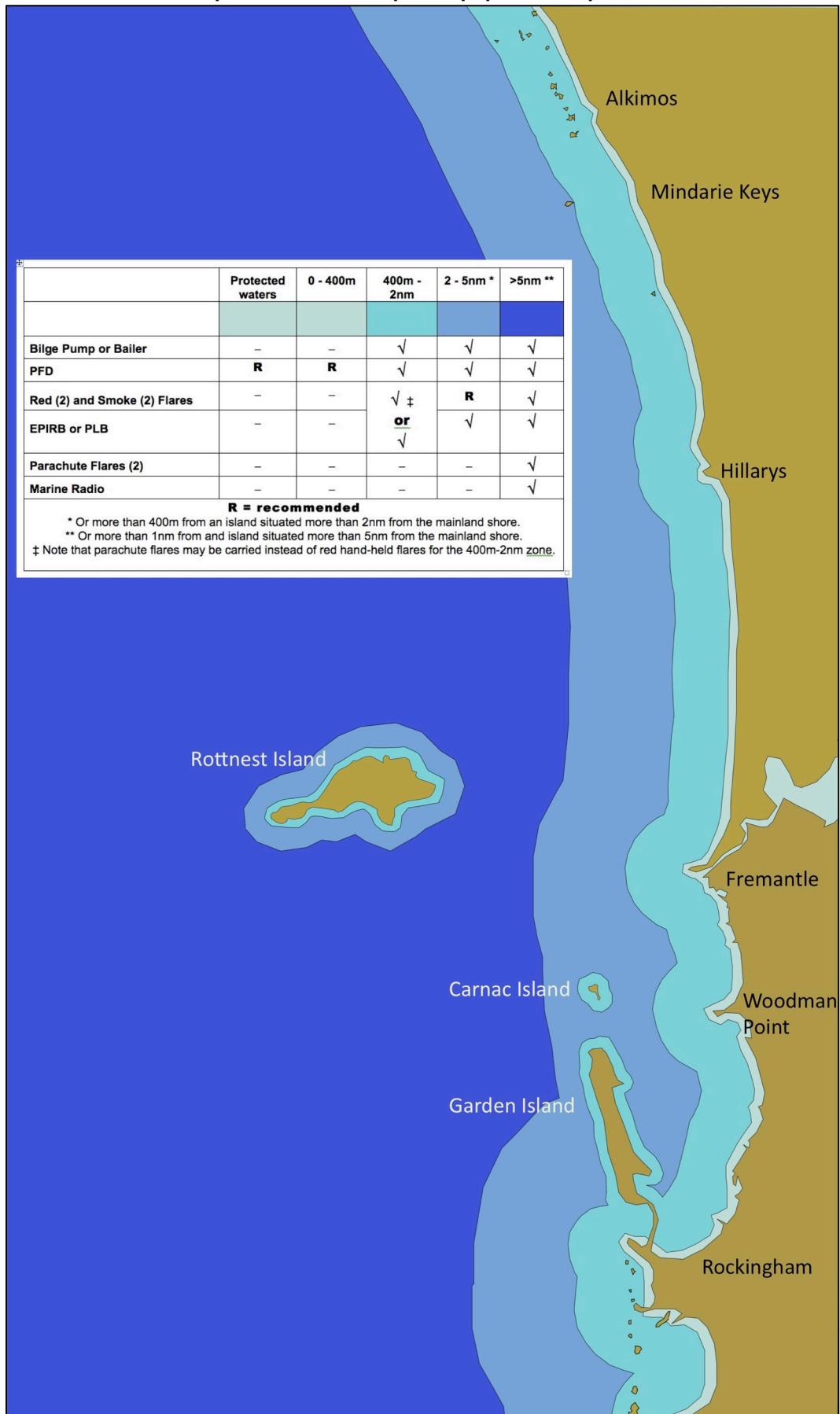
**NOTE** - failure to carry the above equipment may result in heavy fines imposed by marine safety inspectors.

Visit the WA Department of Transport's Paddle-Safe page at <https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/imagine/paddle-craft.asp> for more information.

### **2.3.2 SEA KAYAK CLUB WA INC. EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS.**

The tables on the following pages, "Personal And Safety Equipment Guidelines", list the minimum equipment required for participation in SKCWA day trips at various paddler grades. Every club member is required to ensure that he or she is properly and completely equipped to undertake trips at their paddler grade without having to rely or impose upon others for missing items.

## WA Department of Transport Equipment Requirements



Note that although the WA Department of Transport only requires paddlers to have a PFD beyond 400m offshore, the Sea Kayak Club requires all members to wear one at all times while paddling with the Club. Other club requirements are shown in the table on the following 2 pages.

**SEA KAYAK CLUB WA Inc.**  
**PERSONAL AND SAFETY EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES**

<b>LEGEND</b>  NR not required R required D desirable O optional	<b>Protected Waters</b>	<b>Open Waters</b>	<b>Open Waters</b>	<b>Open Waters</b>	<b>Open Waters</b>	<b>Additional - Paddling in a surf zone</b>	<b>Additional – Paddling near reefs or rocks</b>	<b>Additional - Paddling after dark</b>
<b>Distance from mainland shore <sup>†</sup></b>	0	<400m	400m-2nm	2-5nm	>5nm	All	All	All
Level 100 lifejacket (AS 4758, former Type 1)	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR			
Level 50 or 50S ( AS 4758, former Types 2 and 3) lifejacket	R	R	R	R	R			
Spray skirt / deck	R	R	R	R	R			
Paddle park / leash	R	R	R	R	R			
Whistle on lanyard	R	R	R	R	R			
Knife on a lanyard	O	R	R	R	R			
Spare paddle	O	R	R	R	R			
Cellular telephone	D	D	D	D	D			
Bailer and / or sponge	R	R	R	R	R			
Manual Bilge pump	D	D	D	D	D			
Bilge pump - hands free	O	R	R	R	R			
Anchor and anchor line	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR			
2 x Red flares - hand held	NR	NR	R*	R*	O			
2 x Orange smoke signals hand held	NR	NR	R**	R**	R**			
1 x Orange smoke canister	NR	NR	O	O	O			
2 x Red parachute flares	NR	NR	O	O	R			
15m x 6mm tow rope	NR	R	R	R	R			
Marine weather forecast & tide table	NR	O	O	O	D			
Charts and maps	NR	D	D	D	D			
Rescue slings	NR	D	D	R	R			
VHF Marine band radio	NR	O	D	D	R			
EPIRB or Personal Locator Beacon (PLB)	NR	O	D	R	R			
Paddle float	D	D	D	D	D			

\* Not required if 2 red parachute flares are carried; not required if EPIRB or PLB carried within 5nm

\*\* Not required if 1 orange smoke canister is carried; not required if EPIRB or PLB carried within 5nm

<sup>†</sup> 2nm = 3.7km; 5nm = 9.3km

<b>SEA KAYAK CLUB WA Inc.</b> <b>PERSONAL AND SAFETY EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES</b>								
<b>LEGEND</b>  <b>NR</b> not required <b>R</b> required <b>D</b> desirable <b>O</b> optional	Protected Waters	Open Waters	Open Waters	Open Waters	Open Waters	Additional - Paddling in a surf zone	Additional – Paddling near reefs or rocks	Additional - Paddling after dark
Distance from mainland shore <sup>†</sup>	0	<400m	400m-2nm	2-5nm	>5nm	All	All	All
Signal mirror / Strobe Light	NR	D	D	R	R			
Compass	NR	D	R	R	R			
Space blanket	NR	D	D	D	D			
Helmet	O	D	D	D	R	R	R	
Head lamp, flashlight	NR	O	D	D	R			R
White navigation light	NR	O	O	O	D			R
Personal first aid kit	O	R	R	R	R			
Equipment repair kit	NR	D	D	R	R			
Paddling gloves	D	D	D	D	D			
Sunglasses	R	R	R	R	R			
Adequate food	R	R	R	R	R			
Minimum 2 litres of water	R	R	R	R	R			
Sun block cream & lip salve	R	R	R	R	R			
Paddling shoes / boots	R	R	R	R	R			
Shoes / sandals	D	D	D	D	D			
Hat - sun and wind protection	R	R	R	R	R			
Warm hat / balaclava (winter)	R	R	R	R	R			
Paddling clothes - to suit conditions	R	R	R	R	R			
Paddle jacket / Cag	R	R	R	R	R			
Personal medications	R	R	R	R	R			
Dry bags	D	D	D	D	D			
Additional warm, dry clothing	D	R	R	R	R			

<sup>†</sup> 2nm = 3.7km; 5nm = 9.3km

### 2.3.3 PERSONAL AND SAFETY EQUIPMENT STANDARDS

The following standards are not intended to provide definitive specifications for sea kayaking equipment but should be read as minimum standards and used to provide some guidance as to suitable equipment for use on Club activities.

#### PFD (personal flotation device)

PFDs come in four different types under the Australian Standard 4758 (AS 4758). This standard was introduced by The National Marine Safety Committee on 1 July 2010.

PFDs made to AS 4758 will display these levels:

- Level 150 - a new level of PFD and suitable for offshore use
- Level 100 - similar to previous PFD Type 1 and the minimum requirement for offshore use
- Level 50 - similar to previous PFD Type 2 and used by kayakers
- Level 50S (Special Purpose) - similar to previous PFD Type 3 and used by kayakers

New PFDs made to the old standards and marked as Types 1, 2 or 3 will still be recognised by marine safety authorities for some time, so they can also be bought and used after 1 July 2010. Level 150 and 100 PFDs are designed to keep a person in a face-up position in the water. The Level 100 PFD is considered the legal minimum requirement for offshore (unprotected waters) use. However, the Department of provides an exemption to paddlers, provided a Level 50 or 50S PFD is worn. The pictures below are from the National Marine Safety Committee website.

**Level 150**



**Level 100**  
(previous Type 1)



**Level 50**  
(previous Type 2)



**Level 50S**  
(previous Type 3)



SKCWA Inc safety regulations require that participants in club activities wear a PFD at all times while on the water. Most members prefer to wear a level 50 or 50S type PFD while paddling, as they are less restrictive than a Level 150 or 100.

#### Paddle

The type and size of paddle used is a personal choice, there are numerous types available. Expert advice should be sought and several types "test paddled" before a choice is made. The following points should be considered when purchasing a paddle.

The shaft length, blade size and type, blade pitch and the overall weight of the paddle need to be matched to the paddlers physique, physical strength and endurance requirements.

The paddle selected must allow the full range of paddle and bracing strokes to be done to the correct techniques.

The paddle must be strong enough to withstand the forces involved in all aspects of sea kayaking, including surf launchings and landings.

### **Paddle Leash**

A paddle leash shall be used to secure the paddle to the kayak so that in the event of the paddler having to let go of the paddle for any reason it will not be swept away. The paddle leash must not be attached to the paddler as it may become entangled with the kayak or impede the paddlers ability to swim in the event of a capsize in surf or high seas.

### **Spare paddle**

A minimum of one spare paddle must be available for every five paddlers in a group. As a general rule however every paddler should have their own spare paddle which will be of a similar type and size to their normal paddle such that they would be comfortable using it to complete a trip if necessary. A spare paddle must be located on deck in a position where it can be reached from the cockpit without help and secured so that it will not be lost in surf or when waves sweep the deck.

### **Spray deck or skirt**

The spray deck or skirt must fit the cockpit coaming snugly so that it does not come off during normal paddling activities or when the deck is swept by waves. It should not however be so tight that it cannot be quickly released in an emergency. The skirt must have a grab loop for pulling it away from the coaming during an exit.

### **Whistle**

A whistle shall be carried by all paddlers for the purpose of attracting attention, raising an alarm or identifying their position. It will be secured to the front of their PFD by a short lanyard. A non-corroding, pea-less marine type whistle with a piercing sound is recommended for this purpose. The Fox 40 whistle available from kayak stores is recommended.

### **Knife**

All Paddlers shall carry a rescue knife stowed in a place from where it can quickly and easily be deployed. The knife should be of a type that does not allow any part of the blade to be inadvertently bared when not in use. A stainless steel clasp knife secured by a short (arms length) lanyard to the PFD and stowed in a pocket is recommended. Other types of knife may be carried at the paddlers own discretion and risk. To be effective, the rescue knife needs to be maintained regularly to ensure that it is sharp and, in the case of clasp knives, opens easily when required. Extreme caution must be exercised when a knife is deployed in the confines of a kayak or near other paddlers.

### **Sponge**

A large sponge of approximately 200 x 150 x 50mm dimensions is recommended as a secondary means of removing water from the cockpit. It can be stowed behind or beside the seat in a net or toweling bag and secured with a short lanyard.

### **Bilge pump - hands free**

The presence of water inside a kayak cockpit decreases stability, adds weight and can result in hypothermia in cold conditions. The ability to remove water from the cockpit when necessary is essential. The paddler must be able to evacuate the cockpit of water while maintaining control of the craft. Open water paddling conditions can be such that water will have to be removed while the spray deck is on and the paddler is fully engaged in paddling and control of the kayak. In these conditions a "hands free " method of water removal is essential. While foot operated pumps are available, the recommended system is a switch operated, electric bilge pump powered by a sealed for life, rechargeable battery. The pump system must be checked for correct operation before and after every paddle and inspected and maintained regularly.

### **Bilge pump – manual**

If a manual bilge pump is carried it should be of a type that can be operated, when necessary, while the spray deck is in place on the cockpit rim as the need to pump out a cockpit often follows as a result of a capsize in rough waters.

### **Tow line (standard)**

A standard towline comprises 15 meters of 6.0 mm floating rope with an eye and alloy snap link at each end plus floats that will prevent the snap links from sinking when released from the tow points. The line is folded into a bag of a size that will enable it to be quickly deployed without snagging and easily re-stowed when finished with. The tow line must be very easily accessible and ready for immediate deployment. A tow line should not be stowed in the cockpit.

### **Tow Line (short)**

In addition to their standard tow rope, it is recommended that experienced paddlers carry a short 5.0 metre long tow rope with snap links which can be stowed in a PFD pocket and quickly deployed for short rescue tows that may be required e.g. to move a paddler in trouble away from a hazard or retrieve a lost kayak.

### **Anchor and line**

If an anchor is carried, a 1.5kg folding sand anchor with a 2.0m leader of 3.0mm stainless wire with swaged end eyes will suffice for this purpose. Fifteen metres of 4.0mm nylon cord stored in a small bag will suffice as an anchor line. All of this material is available from most boating suppliers. An anchor and line must not be stowed in the cockpit because it presents a serious risk of entanglement.

### **Flares**

Marine safety regulations require that two hand held red flares (OR 2 parachute flares) and two hand held orange smoke signals (OR one orange smoke canister) be carried in open waters (ref. section 2.3.1) up to 5nm from shore, unless either a PLB or EPIRP is carried. Hand held red flares are not sufficient for waters beyond 5 nm from the mainland shore, where parachute flares must be carried. These can be purchased separately or as an "offshore flare kit " from most boating suppliers. Parachute flares and smoke canisters can be obtained from the same source if required. The Club recommends that paddlers carry 2 parachute flares and one orange smoke canister or 2 parachute flares and 2 hand held orange smoke signals, as these combinations meet the requirements for all offshore waters.

### **Paddle float**

It is strongly recommended that paddlers who are not able to perform a kayak roll always carry a paddle float and know how to self rescue with it. Commercially made inflatable paddle floats are available from paddling shops. Alternatively a PFD level 100 in a suitable bag can be utilized effectively with practice.

### **Compass**

Those frequently taking part in trips involving open water crossings or where it is necessary to follow courses given by a GPS or navigation data sheet need to have a compass fitted to their kayak in a position in front of the cockpit where it can easily be seen. The compass can be screwed permanently to the deck or fixed by shock cord loops so that it is removable. Hand held compasses are not suitable for this purpose as they cannot be used while paddling.

### **Helmet**

A well fitting canoeing helmet made to comply with the CE EN 1385:1998 standard must be worn when surfing, paddling over or near rocks or reefs, during rescue training and when beach landings or launchings are to be made through moderate to heavy surf. The helmet must have a chin strap which must be correctly fastened and adjusted when the helmet is being worn. **Paddlers not wearing a helmet in any conditions do so at their own risk.**

### **Rescue Slings**

Several 25mm webbing slings with a Fastex buckle and of various lengths are desirable for use during rescue operations. Suitable (closed) lengths for the slings would be 20 - 30cm, 50cm and 100cm. The slings are normally carried in a PFD or Cag pocket or alternatively in a small bag secured to the bungy deck cords in front of the cockpit.

## **Electrical equipment**

Any electrical or electronic equipment carried on a kayak must be protected against contact with sea water. Waterproof VHS radios, EPIRBs and GPSs are available and are recommended, cell phones must be stored in a waterproof bag. Fully encapsulated electrical pumps, switches and batteries are recommended. Pumping systems should be installed with soldered wiring connections. All electrical equipment will require frequent inspection and maintenance to remain in good working order.

## **First aid kit**

All paddlers must carry a small personal first aid kit in a waterproof container or bag enabling them to take care of their own cuts and scrapes during day trips. More extensive kits will be carried by Sea Leaders, Instructors and other paddlers with a first aid qualification, and during extended trips.

## **Paddling gloves**

It is recommended that gloves are worn while paddling both to protect the hands from chafe and to prevent sun burn to the backs of the hands. Sailing gloves with or without fingers are suitable for this purpose.

## **Sunglasses**

Sunglasses reduce the amount of UV radiation that reaches the eyes. Close fitting, wrap around style sun glasses prevent UV rays from entering through the sides of the glasses. It is recommended that wrap around style sun glasses be worn at all times when paddling on bright sunlit days to prevent eye damage from direct sunlight or glare off the water. All sunglasses sold in Australia must be labelled as "Sun Glasses" or alternatively "Fashion Spectacles". Choose "Sunglasses" that are labeled as complying with Australian Standard AS/NZS 1067:2003 with an eye protection factor (EPF) rating from 9 - 10 which will prevent at least 95% of UV radiation from reaching the eyes. Coloured glasses are less effective at blocking UV radiation and mirror finishes by themselves do not significantly reduce UV radiation absorption. Spending more on sunglasses does not necessarily guarantee a better quality product.

## **Equipment repair kit**

A basic repair kit enabling running repairs to be carried out to craft and other equipment should be carried by every paddler according to their equipment needs. The kit must be stored in a place where it is accessible at sea if required e.g. in the kayak day hatch, cockpit or bow hatch.

For short day trips this may include items such as a roll of duct tape, a length of 2-3mm Spectra line to replace broken steering wires, a replacement nut, bolt and washer of each size fitted to your boat, small shackles, short lengths of strong cord, canvas needles and thread, a tube of super glue. For longer trips items such as neoprene / fabric patching material, contact cement, spare rudder pin, bungee cord, wire ties and a spare pump switch may be added.

Useful tools would include a small box cutter, pliers, piece of hacksaw blade, small adjustable spanner, a multi tool, a screwdriver handle with 3-4 interchangeable blades.

## **Charts, maps and navigation data sheets**

Marine charts, topographical maps and navigation data sheets recording all details of the route to be paddled are desirable for most club trips. Printed weather forecasts and tide tables are usually carried on extended trips, but not normally on day trips. On day trips however, paddlers are expected to have consulted weather forecasts and tides for the day. Reference materials need to be secured on deck, in front of the cockpit, where they can be viewed easily by the paddler. They are normally secured under the bungee deck cords in front of the cockpit, it may however be necessary to put them away in the cockpit or day hatch to prevent their loss during surf landings or launchings. The documents need to be kept dry and this can be achieved by using a waterproof map case or, more cheaply, by having them plasticized.

## **Paddling clothes**

Some people are able to tolerate heat or cold to a lesser or greater degree than others. Methods of dress for paddling therefore vary widely according to individual needs and preference, usually established through experience in varying conditions. Perth enjoys a temperate "Mediterranean" climate without extremes of temperature, other than occasional hot summer days. Wet suits are generally only worn for winter training exercises by those with less tolerance for cold and dry suits are never seen in this area. Paddling clothes tend to be worn in combinations and layers of polypropylene, fleece, 2mm neoprene, the new fabrics and "outer shell" jackets and long pants in a wide range of materials from Ripstop Nylon to Goretex. During winter, inner layers that do not lose their thermal properties when wet should be worn. Natural fibres such as cotton are not suitable for paddling wear as they are cold when wet and do not wick-off water or dry quickly.

When selecting paddling clothes for an on water activity some of the points to consider are -

- Is the temperature likely to increase or decrease during the day and to what extent?
- What is the likelihood of getting wet during the day either from capsize, rain or surf?
- If it is desirable to add or remove clothing during the paddle will there be an opportunity to land or raft up to do so?

### Footwear

Neoprene paddling shoes or boots should be worn to retain heat, where there is any possibility of injury to the feet during launching or landing or where it may be necessary to exit the kayak over reef or rocks. Suitable shoes, boots or sandals should be carried where there is any likelihood of an overland excursion for the purposes of sightseeing, exploring or evacuation in emergency.

### Personal medications

Any personal medications that may or will have to be taken during the paddle must be stored in a waterproof container located in an easily accessible place on the kayak e.g. Cag / PFD pocket or day hatch. This particularly applies to medications for seasickness and allergies . If help may be required from others to administer the medication in an emergency this must be arranged before the activity commences, and the Sea Leader must be informed.

### Dry Bags

All spare clothing, food and electronic equipment should be put into Dry Bags before the trip starts. Hatch covers may leak, particularly during rough weather and in surf conditions. Equipment may become wet if it is necessary to remove it from a hatch at sea or during wet weather on shore.

## 2.3.4 COMMUNICATION AND EMERGENCY SIGNALLING EQUIPMENT

It is vital that all participants on a club activity on open waters are able to attract attention and pinpoint their position if necessary in the event of an emergency. The following equipment is considered essential for this purpose. Refer also to section 2.3.1.

- Whistle - suitable pea-less marine emergency whistle attached to the PFD with a lanyard.
- Flares - to comply with WA Department of Transport boating standards.
- Smoke signals - to comply with WA Department of Transport boating standards. **Note** - hand held flares and smoke signals can sometimes be obtained at a lower cost if purchased as a "flare kit" from marine equipment outlets.
- Radios - VHF marine radios must comply with Australian Communications Authority standards. Radios must be waterproof and/or be carried in a waterproof container or bag. **Note** - most Sea Rescue groups now have equipment that is able to pinpoint the position of a craft from their radio signal.
- Mobile phones, including satellite phones, used as a backup for a VHF marine radio (ie not as a substitute), must be carried in a waterproof container or bag.
- EPIRB & PLB – to comply with the current Australian Standard.

Other desirable emergency signalling equipment includes the following items.

- Space blanket.
- Signal mirror or strobe light.

### Operating communications equipment

Individuals are responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with, and can competently use, communication and signalling equipment such as radios, EPIRBs, PLBs, flares etc.

## 3.0 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RELATING TO CLUB ON WATER ACTIVITIES.

### 3.1 TRIP LEADERS

#### 3.1.1 TRIP LEADERSHIP CATEGORIES.

There are three basic trip leadership categories which may be defined as follows.

- 1) Activities involving paddlers with basic paddle skills, some sea skills and experience and who have been assessed and passed by an accredited Sea Instructor or Assessor at the PAQS Basic Skills level.

These activities will typically take place on safe waters or a safe, hazard free shoreline not involving reefs, rock gardens or strong tidal flows. Forecast light winds to 12 knots, swell to 1.0m and low waves or surf to 0.5 metres. May involve open water crossings of not more than 2km and uncomplicated launchings and landings.

Activities in this category will be led by a club member who holds an PAQS Sea Leader, Club Sea Leader or Sea Instructor award, who has sea skills and experience relevant to each activity and has been nominated by the committee to lead that activity. Club Sea Leaders are assessed by a qualified assessor to the same level as PAQS Sea Leaders. During these activities Sea Instructors may provide sea skills and knowledge to participants within or beyond the requirements of the activity. It is not however intended that Sea Leaders will impart skills or knowledge to the participants beyond that necessary to complete the activity safely. All decisions relevant to group and individual safety will be made by the Sea Leader or Instructor.

- 2) Activities involving paddlers with proficient paddle skills, sea skills and experience and who have been assessed and passed by an accredited Assessor for the PAQS Introduction to Sea Skills Award. Paddlers in this category will have a range of more challenging paddles available to them than Basic Skills Award paddlers .

These activities may typically involve conditions approaching those of PAQS Sea Skills Award level (see Table in section 4.0).

Activities in this category will be led by a club member who holds an PAQS Sea Leader, Club Sea Leader or Sea Instructor award, who has sea skills and experience relevant to the activity and has been nominated by the committee to lead that activity. During such activities Sea Instructors may provide sea skills and knowledge to participants within or beyond the requirements of the activity.

It is not intended however that Sea Leaders will impart skills or knowledge to the participants beyond that necessary to complete the activity safely. Participants will generally be asked for comments relevant to the progress of the activity but final decisions relating to group and individual safety will be made by the Sea Leader or Instructor.

- 3) Activities involving paddlers with proficient paddle skills, sea skills and experience and who have been assessed and passed by an accredited Assessor for the PAQS Sea Skills Award level.

These activities may typically involve open water crossings of up to 20km, moderately difficult landings, moderate tidal flows and rock gardens but should not include tidal rips or overfalls. Forecast moderate weather and sea conditions not to exceed - winds to 20 knots (38 km/hr), swell to 3.0 metres, seas to 1.5 metres, surf to 1.0 metres.

Activities in this category will be led by a club member who holds an PAQS Sea Leader, Club Sea Leader or Sea Instructor award, who has sea skills and experience relevant to the activity and has been nominated by the committee to lead that activity. During such activities Sea Instructors may provide sea skills and knowledge to participants within or beyond the requirements of the activity.

It is not intended however that Sea Leaders will impart skills or knowledge to the participants beyond that necessary to complete the activity safely. Participants will generally be asked for comments

relevant to the progress of the activity but final decisions relating to group and individual safety will be made by the Sea Leader or Instructor.

### 3.1.2 PADDLER PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES ABOVE THEIR AWARD LEVEL

Members may participate in sea activities one grade higher than they are qualified for, for the purpose of attaining **further** sea skills and experience enabling them to advance to higher qualification, provided they have prior approval from the Sea Leader and will be accompanied on the paddle by an accredited level 2 or 3 Sea Instructor.

### 3.1.3 ADVANCED SEA ACTIVITIES

Open water activities requiring advanced and demanding paddle and sea skills, extensive experience, extended or over the horizon open water crossings, complex navigation skills, exposed coastlines, extended trip times and worse than moderate weather and sea conditions are generally considered to be outside the normal scope of SKCWA programmed activities.

Such activities can generally be categorized as Peer Activities (refer to definitions section 1.5). Participants on these trips will be experienced paddlers with similar abilities and would be expected to participate in determining a group consensus with regard to issues relating to the safe conduct of the activity. If a leader was nominated he would act in the capacity of facilitator and organizer rather than a leader and most matters relating to group safety would be a responsibility shared by all participants.

### 3.1.4 SEA LEADER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Obtain a current weather forecast for the trip area.
- Review the course to be paddled and identify known hazards, waypoints, rest points, escape routes, trip duration and estimated time of return.
- Determine the grade of the trip, according to the trip course and duration, known hazards and actual and forecast weather and sea conditions on the day, using the Trip Grading system as a guide.
- Conduct a pre-launch briefing using the club Pre-Launch Briefing Notes.
- Check for participants' understanding of the conditions pertaining to the day's activity and ensure they have completed a personal risk assessment and consider themselves able to complete the activity without exposing themselves or others to additional risks due to lack of fitness, ill health, inexperience, lack of necessary skills or deficient equipment, for example.
- Take all reasonable steps to check that inexperienced participants are fit and able to take part in the chosen activity. If doubts exist about any participants ability to complete the trip the leader may either advise them to withdraw from the trip or refuse to allow them to participate.
- The Sea Leader may at his/her discretion shorten, change or cancel an activity at any stage if it is believed that an unacceptably high level of risk may result from not doing so.
- Ensure that all participants sign the club Disclaimer form.
- Complete a float plan for the day using the club Float Plan form.
- **If considered necessary**, log the trip with local emergency services by phone or radio and log off again at the end of the trip.
- Set the group dynamics for the day with regard to group spread, lead paddler, tail end Charlie, rescuers and signals to be used. Continuously monitor for compliance during the activity.
- Monitor the physical and psychological condition of the group and individual participants while on the water.
- Make appropriate decisions and take into account safety and the assessment of risk where those decisions or options may affect group and individual safety while on the water.

## 3.2 PARTICIPANTS

### 3.2.1 PARTICIPANT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Participants must be current financial members of the Sea Kayak Club WA Inc.
- Participants must have completed, signed and returned an Paddle Australia membership form and waiver thus ensuring that their insurance is in place.
- Participants must comply with the requirements of these Safety Guidelines and Operating Procedures and with all reasonable suggestions and instructions given to them by a Sea Leader

- Participants must attend a pre-launch briefing and sign the relevant club liability waiver before commencing an on water activity.
- Participants under the age of eighteen years must be accompanied by a parent who is a current financial SKCWA Inc. member and who will be responsible for them for the duration of an activity.
- It is the participant's responsibility to advise the Sea Leader or Instructor of any short or long-term medical condition that could affect that person's ability to safely participate in the selected activity.
- The participant must be able to swim a minimum of fifty metres in open water wearing normal paddling attire including their PFD.
- If the participant is prone to chronic seasickness and sea conditions on the day are such that this could become a problem it is the participant's duty to advise the Sea Leader or Instructor accordingly and to carry suitable medication with them at all times.
- It is the participant's responsibility to carry out their own personal risk assessment as to their ability to safely participate in the chosen activity on the day with regard to their equipment, trip conditions, personal fitness, skills, experience, the route to be followed, weather and sea conditions and to seek advice if they are unsure.
- The Risk Assessment charts in section 6.7 list the hazards and risks most likely to be encountered during club on water activities and their relevant control actions. Each paddler must individually and honestly assess the likelihood and consequences to themselves of these hazards occurring and their ability to apply the relevant control actions.
- The participant must be qualified to a paddling skills award relevant to the activity (ref. section 4).
- Participants training for a higher award may need to gain experience and practice skills in weather, sea and trip conditions of a higher level than that for which they are currently rated. In this situation they must be aware that they may be exposed to risks, not previously experienced, and will need to assess their ability to cope with these risks if they occur. They will need an instructor who is prepared to stay with and assist them during the activity. All other paddlers on the day will be informed of the situation and must accept that the paddle will be aborted if the conditions are deemed too difficult for that participant.
- It is the participant's responsibility to ensure that they seek training and self practice in order to maintain the skills relevant to their paddling skill grade.
- While each participant must be fully responsible for their own actions and safety, they must also be prepared to honestly answer any questions asked of them by the Sea Leader or Instructor, on the day, relevant to their ability to safely participate in the day's activity. Participants must give careful consideration to the answers they give to and heed any advice given by the Sea Leader or Instructor.
- If the Sea Leader or Instructor is not completely satisfied that the participant is equipped and capable of safely completing the days activity then they may, at their discretion, advise the participant to withdraw from the activity or refuse to allow the participant to take part in the activity. The participant must accept this decision as it is being made in their best interests and for the safety of the group.

### **3.3 SEA KAYAKERS SOUND AND VISUAL SIGNALS**

The four primary methods of communicating during on water activities are as follows;

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1) Verbal communication | Most effective method of communication.<br>Can be ineffective in windy conditions or at long distance.   |
| 2) Radio                | Effective in most conditions. The VHF channel to be used on the day to be decided as part of the trip briefing. Radios should be checked before heading out.   |
| 3) Whistle signals      | Usually used to <b>attract attention with one long blast</b> .<br>2 blasts means "come to me".<br>3 or more blasts means "emergency".<br>Can be ineffective in windy conditions or at long distance. |
| 4) Visual signals       | Effective in most conditions except where weather or sea conditions make it difficult to stop paddling and use hands / arms or paddle for signalling.  |

Whichever method of communication is used it must be used in a way that is simple, clear, concise and effective.

#### **3.3.1 VISUAL SIGNALS**

Visual signals made with the arms or paddle are very effective and can be seen over relatively long distances it is essential however that the signaller :-

- a) Has the attention of the person or group being signalled.  
  
This can be achieved by shouting, blowing a whistle, stopping the paddle or sending someone to contact the person who is not paying attention.
- b) The signals can be seen clearly by the recipients of the signal.  
In a large swell, for example, the signaller needs to be aware that he/she may not be visible to some of a group.  
  
During beach landing and launching operations the signaller on the beach needs to ensure that he/she can be seen by those offshore by seeking an elevated position and contrasting background. If using a paddle to signal, ensure that the flat of the paddle blade, not the edge, is towards those being signaled.

Group members should be aware that inexperienced paddlers might not be able to look around or to stop paddling and remove their hands from the paddle or lift their paddle from the water to signal when conditions are rough or hazardous. Other paddlers in a group may be dealing with problems of their own and not be able to react immediately to signals. It is important to maintain a tighter group spread enabling the group to communicate verbally and for paddlers to monitor each other's situation continuously in adverse or difficult conditions.

There is no internationally recognised system of visual signals for sea kayakers. The following pages give the standard visual signals to be used on water and for beach landings and launchings during SKCWA activities.

## VISUAL SIGNALS



- Group Together on me
- Are you OK?
- I'm OK



OR



- Go in the agreed direction
- Come to me

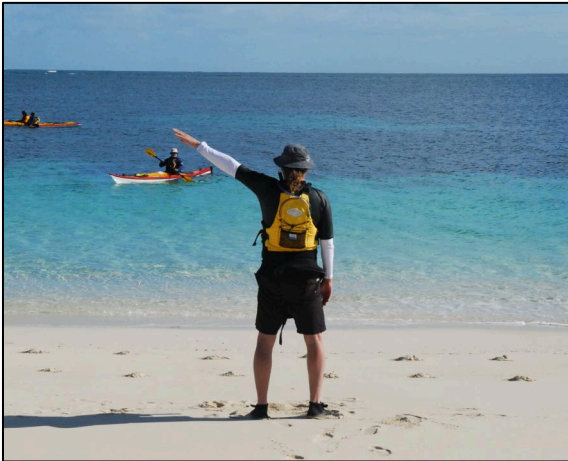


OR

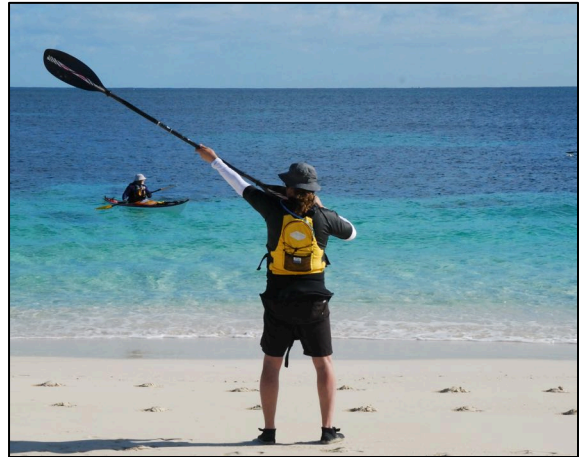


- Stop paddling
- Hold your position

## VISUAL SIGNALS



OR



- Paddle in this direction



OR



- Back paddle



OR



- EMERGENCY
- Help required

### 3.3.2 VHF RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

The following radio procedures are those likely to concern sea kayakers. No one will ever criticize you for using incorrect radio procedures, however it is important when in a 'situation' that you are able to communicate in a way that a Sea Rescue Radio Operator can clearly understand your message.

The scenario: you're sitting in your boat, 7 km offshore, paddle in one hand, radio in the other.

#### 'MAYDAY'

Mayday is the international distress call. It says that you or someone in your group **is threatened by grave and imminent danger and requests immediate assistance**. The distress call can only be authorised by the skipper, master or person in charge of the safety of the vessel - *that's you*. There are no 'ifs and buts', it is a **life threatening situation**.

**All stations** hearing the distress signal must immediately cease all transmissions capable of interfering and listen. The obligation to accept distress calls is absolute.

The Distress Call is transmitted on VHF **Channel 16**, which is monitored by every volunteer marine rescue organization/ limited coast station in Australia. However, be aware that some coast stations can and do operate at differing times during the year. Before launching, always contact the nearest coast station to confirm their times of operation and channels monitored.

#### The distress call

- "MAYDAY" spoken 3 times.
  - "This is: name and call sign of distress vessel" spoken 3 times.
  - "MAYDAY"
  - "Name and call sign of vessel in distress"
- The 3 Ps (Position, Problem and Particulars) then follow (eg):
- "7 km WSW of Mersey Point" (can include Lat & Long from GPS or map)
  - "Sinking after striking submerged reef", or "Paddler with broken leg, possible internal injuries, unable to proceed"
  - "Group of 5 sea kayaks, weather rapidly deteriorating, maintaining position". If EPIRB activated, say "EPIRB Activated".

The distress call may be repeated as often as necessary, especially during silence periods, until an acknowledgement is received. Radio silence periods are observed for three minutes past every hour and half hour.

#### No acknowledgement received

1. No acknowledgement on Emergency Channel 16
2. Try VHF Channel 67. This is the supplementary emergency channel to 16
3. Try local VHF Working Channel. Usually 72 or 73.
4. Still no acknowledgement - **Activate your EPIRB**

#### If you hear a distress call

1. If the distress is, beyond any doubt in your vicinity, you should immediately acknowledge.
2. However, if in the area of a Coast Station, you should defer your acknowledgement for a short interval to allow that Coast Station to acknowledge.
3. If the distress is not in your area, listen for an acknowledgement from a ship / station closer to the distress scene.

No acknowledgement heard. You must now acknowledge receiving the distress call.

From this point all subsequent distress traffic must be prefixed with the word "MAYDAY"

You must decide what action you will take.

- How can this (SKC) group assist?
- Should we paddle to the distress scene?
- How long will it take to arrive at the scene?
- Upon arrival, what can we actually do?
- Further questions you may ask yourself and your group will depend on other factors.

As soon as possible after acknowledging receiving the distress, you must tell the distress caller what it is your going to do.

### **Acknowledge receiving distress call**

- Say- "MAYDAY" spoken once
- Say- "The name & call sign of the distress vessel" spoken 3 times.
- Say- "This is" your call sign. eg "MH290, South Beach" spoken 3 times.
- Say- "Received Mayday". In position 2 km from you. At your position in 20 minutes. Have alerted Rockingham Sea Rescue.

**OR** say-

- "Received Mayday. Have alerted Rockingham Sea Rescue".

To alert Rockingham Sea Rescue you must now 'relay the distress call'.

- Say- "MAYDAY RELAY" spoken 3 times.
- Say- "This is" your call sign spoken 3 times.
- Say- "Mayday & name and call sign of vessel in distress"
- Say- "Position 7 km WSW Mersey Point, On Fire and abandoning to life raft, 3 Persons on board.

When a distress message is transmitted by a station (sea kayak) not in distress, it is essential that this fact be made clear. Failure to follow this procedure could cause confusion and delays.

Never acknowledge receipt of a Mayday Relay message transmitted by a Coast Station unless you are definitely in a position to provide assistance.

### **THE URGENCY SIGNAL**

The urgency signal is spoken as "**PAN PAN**".

It has priority over all other communications except those concerned with distress. A "Pan Pan" signal indicates a very urgent message concerning the safety of a vessel or person that is urgent but not life threatening.

The urgency Signal is usually sent on Distress Channel 16 and can be addressed to a 'particular station' or to 'all stations'. If addressed to 'all stations', the message must be cancelled once the situation has ended.

- Say - "PAN PAN" spoken 3 times.
- Say - "Hello all Stations" **OR** "Rockingham Sea Rescue" spoken 3 times.
- Say - "This is" your call sign spoken 3 times.
- Say "7 km WSW Mersey Point, sea kayak lost paddle, require tow urgently, drifting ENE @ 3.7 nautical miles per hour."

**\*\* Note\*\*:** If the 'urgency message' is likely to be lengthy or it concerns an urgent medical case, the station receiving the call may request you switch to a working channel eg: Channel 73.

### **THE SAFETY SIGNAL**

The safety Signal is SECURITE and spoken as **"SAY-CURE-E-TAY"**.

It indicates a station is about to transmit a message concerning an important navigational or weather warning.

1. This signal **is not** used to precede routine weather forecasts.
2. You should continue to listen until you are satisfied that it does not concern you.
3. The initial Safety Signal will be transmitted on Emergency Channel 16 and the actual message content on a working channel.

You will hear:

- "SAY-CURE-E-TAY" spoken 3 times.
- "Hello all Stations" spoken 3 times.
- "This is" call sign of station making the call spoken 3 times.
- "Navigational Warning, Listen on 73 (Pronounced "seven- three"). You now switch to channel 73 and listen.

You will hear:

- "SAY-CURE-E-TAY" spoken 3 times.
- "Hello all Stations" spoken once.
- "This is" call sign station making call spoken once.
- "Position 7 km WSW Mersey Point; shipping container floating just below surface; danger to navigation."

### **RANDOM POINTS:**

- There is no such thing as "Over and Out". You can only be one or the other.
- VHF Radio range is the combined line of sight of both stations.
- Did you know that limestone absorbs radio waves? Watch for limestone cliffs.
- Every paddler should consider carrying 4 AA batteries in their day hatch. Those batteries may be needed to power a dying radio or GPS in a distress situation.
- In a distress situation with low battery power, don't worry about procedure, just say "MAYDAY" and get your position out.
- Always listen before transmitting.
- Unless in a distress or urgency situation never transmit during the mandatory periods of silence.
- If your vessel (sea kayak) is not registered, use your car registration number and name of boat ramp where your car is parked as your call sign. This will help identify you in an emergency. Eg; launched from South Beach, then my call sign will be: "MH290, South Beach".

The club has an invigilator for the purpose of sitting the Australian Waters Qualification (AWQ) for the use of VHF radios in Australian Territorial waters

If any members would like further information

[https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/mediaFiles/marine/MAC\\_P\\_marine\\_radios.pdf](https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/mediaFiles/marine/MAC_P_marine_radios.pdf) or

<https://www.acma.gov.au/theacma/marine-vhf-radio>

### **3.4 ON WATER ACTIVITY GROUP DYNAMICS**

#### **Group Size**

The ideal group size for SKCWA activities is five (5) participants. Larger groups are difficult to manage, particularly in deteriorating weather and sea conditions and should be split up into smaller sub groups of around five paddlers. The combined strength of each sub group should be similar. Each sub group will have its own sub group leader who will report to the Sea Leader. The Sea Leader and sub group leaders will between them set and co-ordinate the group dynamics for the trip. Ideally groups or sub groups should not comprise less than four (4) paddlers.

#### **Group spread and communications**

Group spread has a major impact on the ability of a group of paddlers to communicate with each other. Group spread will vary depending on the paddling conditions and dynamics within the group, but communications must be maintained with all members of the group. VHF radios make on water comms much easier. If a paddler is out of communication range (via voice, whistle or other means) the group is too spread out and must pause and regroup. **It is the responsibility of individual paddlers to continuously check and maintain their position within the group.**

#### **Group spread and safety**

Group spread has a major impact on the ability of a group of paddlers to assist each other in the event of an emergency. Speed of response in an emergency can be a life or death factor. Unless the Sea Leader or Instructor deems otherwise, for special reasons, participants should paddle within a fifty-meter radius of the Sea Leader or Instructor. It is the paddler's responsibility to ensure that he/she is paddling within the nominated radius.

#### **Paddlers who abandon a club paddle group**

Any paddler who leaves the group during a club on water activity and does not rejoin the group within a reasonable time, having been given the opportunity and encouragement to do so, will be viewed as having abandoned the club activity. In this event the club and its participating members and officers will take no responsibility for the actions or safety of that paddler.

#### **Group speed**

The Sea Leader, with the assistance of the Lead Paddler and Tail End Charlies, will ensure that the group proceeds at the speed of the slowest paddler so that all participants are able to maintain the nominated group spread. It is the paddler's responsibility to ensure that he is fit enough to maintain a speed that will not unduly delay the group.

#### **Lead Paddler**

An experienced participant who is familiar with the course to be paddled should be nominated by the Sea Leader or sub group leaders as the Lead Paddler for the group or sub group. The main duties are route finding and control of group speed ensuring that the faster paddlers do not leave the rest of the group behind and that the set group spread is maintained.

#### **Tail End Charlies**

Two experienced participants should be nominated by the Sea Leader or sub group leader as Tail End Charlies for the group or sub group. The nominated paddlers stay at the rear of the group or sub group and ensure that nobody is left behind for any reason. As they are in the best position to monitor the whole group they should regularly count the number of kayaks to ensure that all are present, signal the Lead Paddler if the group becomes extended, and sound the alarm if a paddler is missing or in trouble.

#### **Rescuer**

An experienced paddler, proficient in assisted rescue techniques, should be nominated by the Sea Leader or sub group leader as first response Rescuer for each group or sub group. In the event of a paddler requiring assistance it will be the rescuer's responsibility to immediately respond and assist. The group or sub group leaders will coordinate the rest of the group and provide extra assistance as necessary. If the nominated rescuer is not close by, the nearest paddler should commence rescue operations.

#### **First Aid Provider**

If there is a qualified first aider in a group it will be their responsibility to render first aid, if required, to the best of their ability and to seek medical assistance or advice by radio or telephone if necessary.

**Surf landing or launching**

Where a group has to launch or land through surf only one participant will be in the surf zone at any time. The group leader will nominate who will launch first and coordinate the group as it assembles beyond the surf line while a nominated experienced paddler will act as Beach Master and launch last to assist others off the beach. When landing, a nominated experienced paddler will land first to act as Beach Master and assist others onto the beach while the group leader coordinates waiting paddlers beyond the surf line. In the event of a capsize in the surf, rescuers should approach the capsized kayak by paddling into the surf not with it. Under no circumstances will anyone attempt to tow a paddler in the surf zone. When beach landings or launchings are to be made through moderate to heavy surf, a well fitting canoeing helmet made to the appropriate standard specification must be worn and correctly fastened (see section 2.3.3).

**Group Decision Making**

Although the Sea Leader can consult with the other paddlers, in the interest of group safety he/she is responsible for making the final decisions. Paddlers who are not in agreement with a final decision made on the beach must make an assessment as to whether or not they wish to continue with the activity in the circumstances. Some suitable decision making process follows which would not put less able paddlers into situations with which they are not comfortable. When making group decisions Peer Group paddlers may use any process that arrives at a final decision that is acceptable to those participating.

**3.5 GUIDELINE UPON SIGHTING OF SHARK WHILE ON WA SKC GROUP PADDLE**

An individual paddler upon sighting of a threatening shark should signal to fellow paddlers immediately, using two whistle blasts and the come-to-me signal.

Group paddlers should respond by:

- Rafting up (joining kayaks together to form a large mass) as quickly as possible to support the paddler who has seen the shark – this presents a surface shape to the shark that is less similar to its usual prey than the shape of a single kayak;
- Remaining still;
- Keeping limbs well out of the water;
- If shark sighted is of a size >2m length, the trip leader should consider contacting the nearest sea rescue organisation by VHF radio on CH 73 to advise of the observation, to allow them to alert others in the area.

Once it is clear that the shark is no longer in the area or has not been seen for 10-15 minutes, the Trip Leader should determine whether to continue the planned paddle route or return to shore.

Following a shark sighting, do not make splashing noises on the water, such as hitting paddle blades on the surface

## 3.6 TOWING PROCEDURES

### Introduction

The procedures outlined in this document are recommendations only and circumstances and sea conditions may require adaption and innovation to achieve the desired outcome. They outline a procedure that can take place in most conditions, which has been proven to be effective.

### Priority

The priority in any towing situation is the safety and welfare of the paddler and the paddling group. Boats are an important, but secondary consideration.

### Titles and role description

Tower	the person towing the boat.
Tower's friend	the person paddling alongside the tower.
Communicator	the paddler located between the tower and the boat being towed.
Patient	the person in the boat being towed.
Patient's friend	the paddler alongside the patient.
Reserve paddlers	the remaining group members not immediately involved in the tow.
Reserve manager	the person who manages the reserve paddlers.
Tow manager	the paddler who has overall responsibility for the tow.

### Recommended equipment for the tow

- 15m tow rope fitted with carabiners (snap links) on each end (Fig 3).
- 5m tow rope, similarly fitted with carabiners (Fig 1).
- Quick release towing belt (Fig 2) or a PFD fitted with a rescue harness (Fig 5).
- Towing cleat on the tower's boat (Fig 7).
- Towing point on the patient's boat (Fig 6).
- An attaching strap (Fig 4).

The equipment list above included a tow belt or rescue harness PFD and a towing cleat.

- All rescue belts and towing harnesses should be fitted with a quick release mechanism to enable the tower to separate tower and patient in emergency situations. This follows the theory that it is better to have one boat in trouble than two.
- The towing cleat when fitted to the tower's boat serves the purpose of transferring the towing load lower and to the boat, rather than the paddler, allowing the tower to paddle freely.
- The cow tail on the rescue harness PFD achieves a similar result, although the load is now on the paddler, and also higher.

### Protocols of the tow

This description presumes there is a group of paddlers and one gets into trouble and needs a tow.

*NOTE: It has proven to be effective to conduct this activity on land as a training activity to familiarize all paddlers with the procedure prior to taking to the water.*

#### Emergency Tow

As a first priority the safety of the paddler is paramount. The paddler must be safely extracted from any dangerous situation. If a paddler needs a tow in order to get the boat away from immediate danger, a short 5 metre tow line is the preferred option. By attaching the short towline the towed boat can respond effectively and be quickly towed away from the danger area. In these circumstances, the first capable and equipped person should commence the tow, moving the towed boat to a safer position. Once away from the immediate problem area a more comprehensive tow can take place.

#### Comprehensive Tow

Once the paddler is safely away from the immediate danger and is back in his/her boat, it is time for the comprehensive towing protocols to begin. The tow is controlled by the tow manager who has overall responsibility and authority to conduct the activity. This person may be the paddle leader or a more suitably qualified or experienced paddler from within the group. However this responsibility lies with the paddle leader until otherwise delegated.



Figure 1. 5m tow rope.



Figure 2. Tow belt.



Figure 3. 15m tow rope.



Figure 4. Attachment strap.



Figure 5. PFD with towing harness and cowtail.



Figure 6. Towing point on bow.



Figure 7. Cleat behind cockpit.

Several things will need to be considered in a small period of time.

- Is the paddler capable of being towed or is external support or assistance needed.
- Assuming that the paddler can be towed, a direction of paddle needs to be decided upon.
- Can the group continue to the initial destination or is it necessary to get to land ASAP or to seek help?
- A patient's friend should be appointed to monitor the patient. This may require close proximity paddling or direct contact monitoring.
- At the same time, a suitably equipped tower should be nominated, allowing him/her time to get organised and into position. The tower will need to prepare his/her tow rope and move to the front of the patient's boat and attach the tow rope. He/she can then commence to paddle away from the patient's boat into a position in front where he/she can commence the tow. It is recommended that a 15m tow line be used as this allows for a margin of safety for the tower in the event of a large or following sea.

At this early stage the essentials of the tow have been put in place and the tow has commenced. It is now time to appoint the remaining roles between the group. The tower's friend will paddle alongside the tower monitoring his/her condition and providing any assistance necessary.

The communicator will position him/herself approximately halfway between the tower and the patient in a position that won't foul the towline. This position will vary with the sea conditions at the time. His/her role is to pass any messages between the two groups as sea conditions and boat location can inhibit effective communications over this distance.

The patient's friend's role is to monitor the patient looking for signs that may indicate that he/she is not in a position to remain upright in their boat. If this situation occurs, the friend should take the initiative early and attach themselves to the patient's boat and hold the patient in his/her boat. The attaching strap (or similar) should be used to attach the two boats together allowing the friend to effectively support the paddler.

A reserve manager to manage the reserve group of paddlers should be appointed to ensure that this group stays in close proximity to the tow and is responsive to the needs of the tow. The distance from the tow will depend on the conditions, but a distance of no more than 30m from the patient is recommended. Two paddlers from this group should be nominated to take over the role of tower in turn. The first of these will be informed of the next changeover time by the tow manager and he/she should be in position alongside the communicator when required. The nomination of subsequent reserve paddlers from this group can now be managed by the reserve manager.

Now that the tow is underway, the tow manager should consider the following issues -

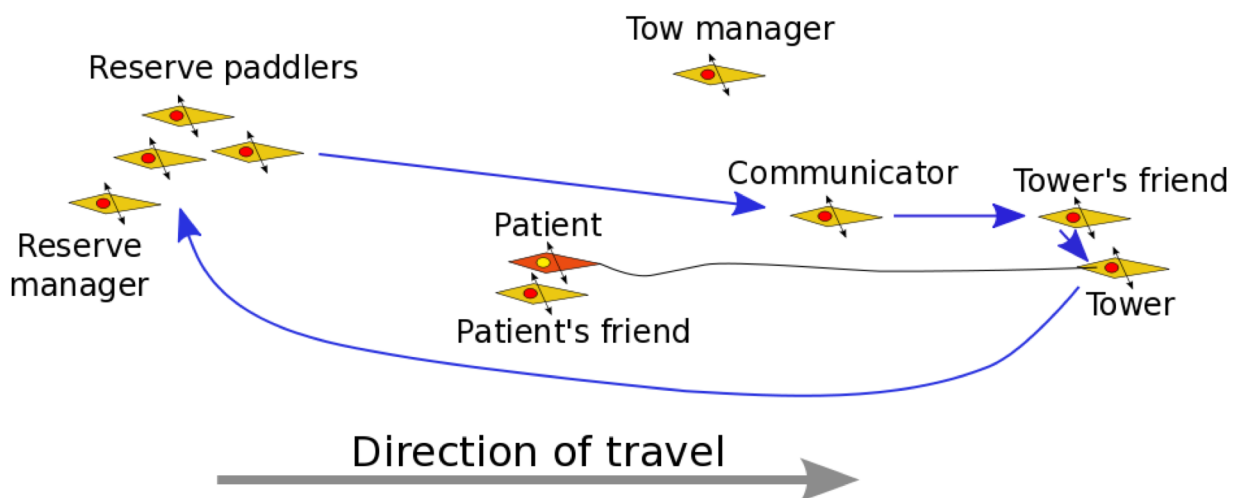
- Is the tow operating smoothly?
- Are all the participants aware of their role?
- What is the condition of the patient?
- What time intervals should be used to change the paddlers from their current roles?
- Is the current plan still effective?
- Do we need to make land fall ASAP or can we continue with the direction we are currently taking?
- Are communications amongst the group proving effective, with all paddlers within the group aware of the ongoing situation?

Having taken time to consider the above, the tow manager should check on the condition of all of the paddlers immediately involved in the tow. This can be done verbally or by close proximity paddling.

The tow manager should then paddle along the tow and advising all members when the next changeover will take place and ensuring that the paddlers are aware of the changeover protocols. Depending on sea conditions and the makeup of the group, the tower should be changed every 5 minutes. Factors that may influence this are the numbers of paddlers, their ability to continue to tow and the expected distance of the tow.

The actual changeover protocol is as follows:-

- The patient's friend should stay with the patient at this stage as he/she is in the best position to monitor any changes in their condition. This position can be taken by a paddler who may not be as strong as other paddlers within the group and may not be in a position to undertake the tower's role.
- The next nominated tower from the reserve group will move to the communicator's position,
- The communicator then moves to the tower's friend position
- The tower's friend becomes the tower.
- The tower and friend hand over the tow rope by unclipping the carabiner. The "new" tower attaches the tow rope to his/her towing system (tow belt or cow tail), allowing the 'old' tower to keep his/her system.
- The "old" tower then moves back to the reserve paddlers where he/she has time to recuperate.
- In this way the changeover of the roles happens smoothly and in a forward direction. Once underway, discussions can be held as to how the changeover was conducted and any improvements that could be made for the next changeover.



The tow should continue with the tow manager monitoring all members of the group, assessing their condition and deciding if it can continue the way it is at the moment.

- The condition of the patient is of prime concern.
- Is he/she getting better or worse?
- Is it time to change direction and head for a landing?
- Is it time to call for outside assistance?

Similarly, the condition of the group as a whole in their role as the tower should be assessed.

- Is the time span between changeovers still appropriate, should it be changed to a lesser time?
- What is the cutoff between effective towing time and too much changeover activity?
- How are the group members handling the extra task of towing?
- Is the group maintaining its cohesiveness?

Having reached the destination, the next phase of the tow is to get the paddler and his/her boat safely to land. If conditions allow it, several paddlers could go to shore, park their boats and then assist the paddler to shore. This strategy will vary according to conditions, but the safety of all paddlers must be taken in to consideration. If the conditions do not allow for a safe landing the following could be considered:

- Take the paddler out of his/her boat and with a helper(s) swim them to shore, leaving the paddler's boat for a separate landing. Once the swimmers and patient are safely onshore the rest of the group and the patient's boat can be landed. The most effective method of landing the boat is to ensure that there are no swimmers or other boats in the landing/surf zone and then push it into the wave zone. The boat must then make its way to shore through the surf.
- If it is considered that the patient cannot make it through the surf, then consideration must be taken to call in external assistance where the patient can be taken out of his/her boat onto a rescue craft.

Having completed the tow, the tow manager should conduct a debrief of the event within the group and at a later, but appropriate time complete a SKCWA Incident Report and forward it to the club Secretary.

## 4.0 TRIP / PADDLER GRADING GUIDELINES

The Trip / Paddler Grading Guidelines have been established as a guideline to: -

- Assist Sea Leaders and Instructors in grading an on water activity according to the activity, weather and sea conditions prevailing or forecast over the duration of that activity.
- Assist Participants with a gauge to self assess their current competence, skills, physical and mental condition and general ability to participate safely in a graded on water activity in the conditions applying.

When making their self assessment participants need to consider the following factors.

### **What are my current limitations?**

- Can I cope with the current and forecast weather and sea conditions.
- Can I cope if weather or sea conditions deteriorate and are different or worse than forecast.
- What speed can I maintain in the expected conditions, compared to the rest of the group.
- Am I able to paddle the distance necessary to complete the trip in a reasonable time.
- Can I paddle the distances necessary to get out of difficulty in worsening conditions.
- What is the maximum time I will have to stay in my boat without landing, can I do this.
- Can I cope mentally and physically with all foreseeable hazards.
- Am I capable of carrying out self and assisted rescues if required.
- Do I have all of the items of equipment necessary for the trip, are they in good condition.

Club members must be aware that paddling on the ocean is more physically and mentally demanding than it is on sheltered waters, and that a reasonable fitness level will be required to paddle even moderate distances. Participants must be able and prepared to honestly assess their own abilities and not expect others to do this for them. Paddlers may have 'formal skill' qualifications, but are unfit for the trip on the day due to lack of fitness, ill health lack of competence or insufficient experience in the prevailing conditions. If in doubt paddlers should adopt the precautionary principle and not attempt the trip.

All paddlers must be prepared and ready to care for themselves and others in the event of complications. Decisions will often be made according to a consensus arrived at through group discussion. All participants must be prepared to contribute. Non-participation in the decision making process will be taken as acceptance of any consensus arrived at by other trip participants.

## TRIP / PADDLER GUIDELINES

Relevant PA Skills Award	Participant Skills and Abilities	Typical Location Description	Weather / Sea Limits	Relevant PAQS Leader Award
Basic Skills Award.	Beginners with basic skills and some paddling experience. Able to paddle up to 15 km per day.	Estuaries, lakes and other protected waters or uncomplicated coastal waters. Crossings less than 1km from land (ie.2 km crossing). Possible wind against wave or tide effects. Small breaking seas.	Calm to 12 knot wind Swell to 1.0 metre. Sea to 0.5 metres. Surf to 0.5 metres	Sea Leader Sea Instructor
Introduction to Sea Skills Award	Paddlers with proficient skills plus ability to assist rescue, self rescue, bracing, towing, and entry and exit through 0.5m surf. Able to sustain speeds of 5-6 km/hr for 20 km per day in unprotected coastal waters.	Unsheltered coastal waters. Crossings up to 4km from land (ie. 8 km crossing) . Possible wind against wave or tide effects. May encounter steepening swell and 0.5m breaking seas. Possible surf entries and exits.	Calm to 15 knot wind Swell to 2.0 metres. Sea to 1.0 metres Surf to 0.5 metres.	Sea Leader Sea Instructor
Sea Skills Award	Paddlers with proficient skills plus ability to assist rescue, self rescue, bracing, towing, and entry and exit through 1.0m surf. Able to sustain speeds of 6-7 km/hr for 30 km per day in unprotected coastal waters. Able to make open water crossings and manage minor emergencies.	Unsheltered coastal waters. Crossings up to 8km from land (ie. 16km crossing). Currents to 2kn. Possible wind against wave or tide effects. May encounter steepening swell and breaking seas. Possible surf entries and exits.	Calm to 17 knot wind Swell to 3.0 metres. Sea to 1.5 metres Surf to 1.0 metres	Sea Leader Sea Instructor
Advanced Sea Skills Award.	Advanced paddlers able to apply complex sea kayaking skills in difficult conditions. able to sustained speeds of 7-8 km/hr for 60 km per day in unprotected waters. Able to make extended open water crossings, and to manage major emergencies.	Unsheltered coastal waters. Extended crossings. Currents to 4kn. Possible wind against wave or tide effects. May encounter steep swells and breaking seas. Possible difficult surf entries and exits up to 2.0m.	Calm to 25 knot wind. Heavy swells and big seas	Peer Group Senior Sea Instructor

## 5.0 SKILLS TRAINING

### 5.1 SKILLS TRAINING POLICY

All training will be carried out in accordance with Paddle Australia's qualification scheme (PAQS) requirements and be provided by accredited Instructors and Assessors.

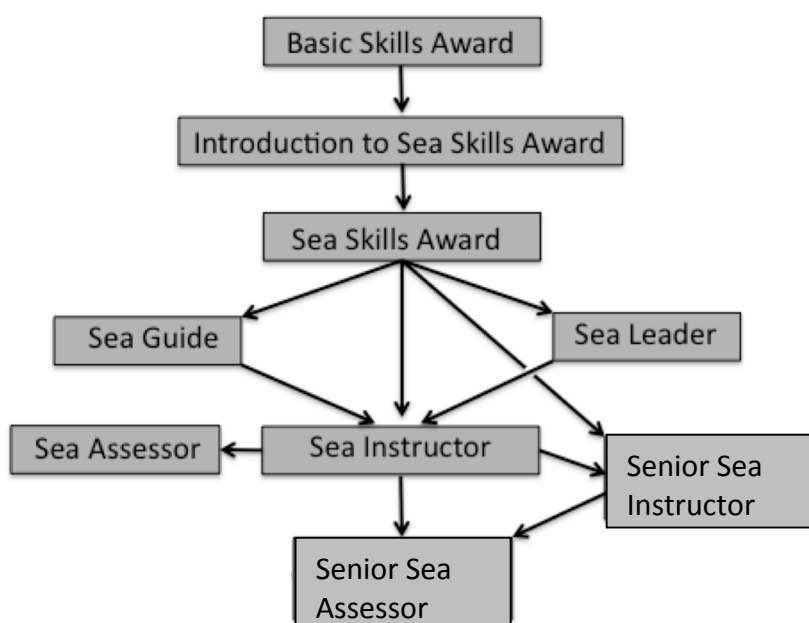
All Club members are encouraged to attend training courses to either develop their skills and knowledge or keep them up to date. Sea kayak training, to award level, can be provided by the club's accredited Instructors or is alternatively available through commercial National Training Providers accredited by Paddle Australia Ltd.

Participants must be aware that having attained certain skills or an award at training courses does not automatically qualify them as proficient in the application of those skills in the varying conditions encountered at sea. On-going practice in a variety of conditions will normally be required to achieve competence. Sea Leaders and Instructors may require newly trained participants to demonstrate competence in the skills learned prior to participation in an on water activity.

The Club recognises formal qualifications awarded by other national or international organizations only when such qualifications have received cross accreditation from Paddle Australia Ltd. Members who have gained Paddle Australia Ltd. awards through non club training providers or have cross accredited qualifications awarded by other organizations may be asked by a trip or activity Leader or Instructor to demonstrate key skills to ensure, to the Leaders or Instructors satisfaction, that they are competent to participate in a club on water activity.

### 5.2 SKILLS PROGRESSION

**Paddle Australia Qualification Scheme (PAQS) and SKCWA certification progression chart.**



The PAQS handbook is available online from the Paddle Australia website at <https://paddle.org.au/education-safety/education-paqs/> , or the SKCWA website at <https://www.seakayakwa.asn.au/safety-and-training-2/> . Summaries of requirements for Introduction to Sea Skills, Sea Skills and Sea Leader Awards may be downloaded from Paddle Australia's website.

## 6.0 RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

Risk Assessment and Management activities involve the identification, assessment and management of risks that may arise during the normal course of an SKCWA programmed or scheduled activity. It does not attempt to identify and deal with the wide range of risk scenarios that may occur due to unusual situations or combinations of occurrences and conditions that cannot reasonably be foreseen. The following guidelines are to be used by participants, leaders and instructors to assist them in assessing the risks associated with a chosen activity on a particular day under the expected conditions and their personal ability to safely lead or participate in that activity. It will inform them of the actions that need to be taken in the event of an emergency involving them or the group they are paddling with and allow them to assess their knowledge and ability to carry out those actions. It will assist them in making informed personal decisions with regard to which activities they are able to safely participate in. The ultimate decision to participate rests with the individual and emphasis is placed on self-assessment and members accepting responsibility for their own actions.

### 6.2 DEFINITIONS

<b>Hazard</b>	“Hazard” means anything that has the potential to harm the health or safety of a person or group of people.
<b>Risk</b>	The chance of something happening that will have an impact upon safety objectives, measured in terms of likelihood and consequences of that risk occurring.
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	The process of evaluating the likelihood (probability) and consequences of injury or illness arising from exposure to an identified hazard or hazards.
<b>Risk Management</b>	The processes, techniques and actions that are directed towards the effective management of potential risks and the adverse consequences of such an event occurring.

### 6.3 SCOPE OF RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Risk management in the Sea Kayak Club WA Inc is addressed on both organisation and individual levels. The objectives of the club are to ensure that its members have the skills, knowledge and information necessary to safely participate in club activities. Members must use the skills, knowledge and information provided to practice the activity, gain competence and be able to honestly assess their ability to participate in those activities and to make their own decisions as to which activities they will participate in.

The aims and objectives of the risk management program are to identify, predict, prevent and control possible events that may result in accident, injury or stress to an individual or group.

The club committee is responsible for formulating and maintaining the ‘Risk Assessment and Management Plan’. The club members are responsible for ensuring that they understand the Plan and for implementing it when participating in club activities.

### 6.4 IDENTIFICATION OF RISKS AND HAZARDS

Risk identification is the process of determining what potential harm can happen, what can cause it to happen and how it can occur. Risks and hazards arising from sea kayaking can generally be categorised under four headings i.e. environmental factors, human factors, equipment and procedures. Information sources for identifying risks and hazards include - personal experience, checklists, procedures and policies, brainstorming, trip accounts, records, forecasts, observations, scenario analysis and accident reports.

### 6.5 RISK EVALUATION CRITERIA

Risk is evaluated on an escalating scale in tables of **likelihood** and **consequence** to establish an **overall level of risk**.

#### Likelihood

<b>Rare</b>	The event may only occur in exceptional circumstances.
<b>Unlikely</b>	There is a slight chance that the event could occur at some time.
<b>Moderate</b>	There is a reasonable probability the event will occur at some time.
<b>Likely</b>	The event will probably occur in most circumstances.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

**Almost certain** Very possible, the event is almost certain to occur.

### Consequences

**Insignificant** No injuries

**Minor** First aid treatment, minor stress, damage or disruption.

**Moderate** Medical treatment required, equipment damage or loss possible, event will be disrupted.

**Major** Extensive injuries, major equipment damage or loss probable, event will be terminated and outside assistance needed, probable outside investigation.

**Catastrophic** Death, total equipment loss, event will be terminated, outside intervention and investigation guaranteed.

### Overall Level of Risk

**H High Risk** Requires detailed management planning at all times.

**S Significant Risk** Management required to control risks.

**M Moderate Risk** Can be managed by specific response procedures.

**L Low Risk** The risk can be managed by routine procedures.

RISK ASSESSMENT TABLE		CONSEQUENCES					
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic	
LIKELIHOOD	Rare	L	L	M	S	S	OVERALL RISK LEVEL
	Unlikely	L	L	M	S	H	
	Moderate	L	M	S	H	H	
	Likely	M	S	S	H	H	
	Almost certain	M	S	H	H	H	

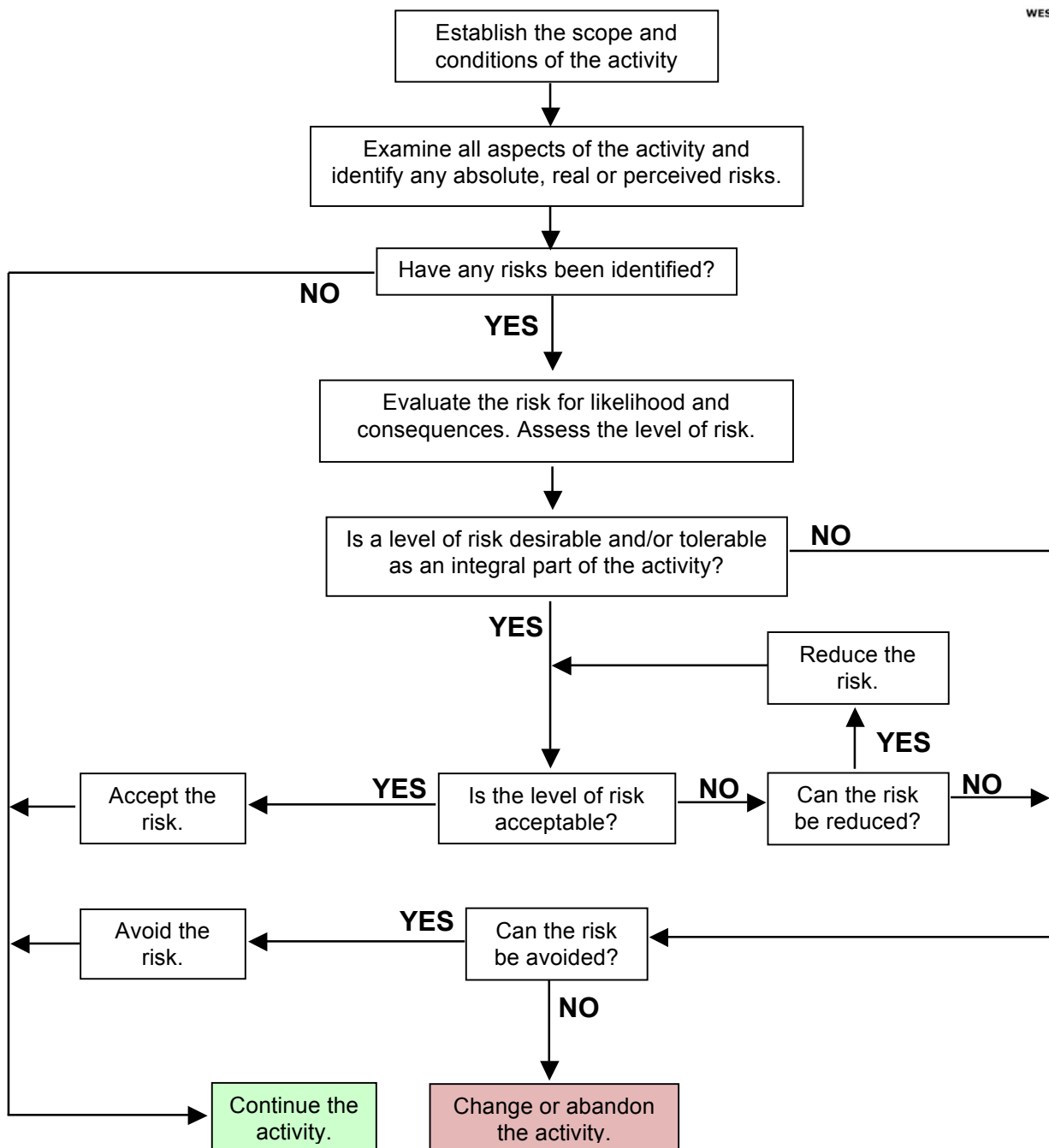
## 6.6 RISK IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROCESS

The flow chart on the following page provides a process for the identification, assessment and management of risks.

## 6.7 RISK IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT REGISTER

The tables on the following pages seek to identify, assess and provide control actions for risks that may arise during the normal course of an SKCWA programmed or scheduled activity. They do not attempt to identify and deal with the wide range of risk scenarios that may occur due to unusual situations or combinations of occurrences and conditions that cannot reasonably be foreseen.

## RISK IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT MATRIX



**RISK ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES**

<b>HAZARD</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Consequences</b>	<b>Assessment</b>	<b>RISKS</b>	<b>CONTROL ACTIONS</b>
Capsize at sea	Likely	Minor	Significant	Panic. Risk to rescuers. Trapped in cockpit. Water inspiration. Drowning. Hypothermia. Swept into danger (rocks or surf).	Ability to handle expected sea conditions. Proficiency in low and high bracing and surfing. Able to wet exit from kayak. Able and equipped to raise the alarm. Able to self-rescue. Able to make assisted re-entry to kayak
Capsize in surf	Likely	Moderate	Significant	Panic. Risk to rescuers. Trapped in cockpit. Water inspiration. Drowning. Hypothermia. Swept into danger ( rocks, rips etc ). Head, neck, spine or limb injuries	Ability to handle expected surf conditions. Understand the need to launch and land one kayak at a time on surf beaches. Proficiency in low and high bracing and surfing. Able to wet exit from kayak. Able to self-rescue in surf.
Surf launching and landing.	Likely	Moderate	Significant	Capsize. Contact with bottom, rocks, reef etc. Head, neck, spine or limb injuries. Risk to rescuers. Damage to kayak and equipment.	Ability to handle expected surf conditions. Know, understand and practice correct surf launching and landing techniques. Proficiency in low and high bracing and surfing. Able to wet exit from kayak. Able to self-rescue in surf.
Become separated from kayak	Moderate	Moderate	Significant	Panic, Risk to rescuers. Water inspiration. Hypothermia. Swept into danger (rocks or surf ). Injury, death.	Able and equipped to raise the alarm and pinpoint position in prevailing conditions. Able to swim to kayak and self rescue or able to make assisted return and re-entry to kayak if necessary.
Become separated from a group	Moderate	Moderate	Significant	Unable to communicate with group. No assistance if emergency arises. Exhaustion as slow paddlers try to keep up. Fear and frustration.	Preparedness and ability to maintain nominated group speed and spread. Continuously monitor position relative to group. Raise the alarm if falling behind. Discuss any decision to leave group with trip leader. Be aware of emergency plans.
Debilitating fatigue or fear	Moderate	Moderate	Significant	Disorientation and capsize potential. Exhaustion. Partial or total incapacity. Shock. Hyperthermia.	Able to assess the conditions and demands of the trip and own physical and mental ability to handle same.

## RISK ASSESSMENT &amp; MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

HAZARD	CONTROL ACTIONS					
	RISKS					
	Assessment	Consequences	Likelihood			
	Assessment	Consequences	Likelihood			
	Assessment	Consequences	Likelihood			
Lost or broken paddle.	Significant	Moderate	Moderate	Fear. Unable to proceed or manoeuvre. Capsize. Swept into hazard or out to sea. Hypothermia. Injury. Death.	Ensure paddle is attached to kayak by a leash. Carry a spare paddle on kayak. Able and equipped to raise the alarm and identify position.	
Unable to handle the expected environmental conditions.	High	Major	Moderate	Exhaustion. Fear. Partial or total incapacity. Unable to proceed or manoeuvre. Swept into danger. Capsize. Drowning. Kayak or equipment lost or damaged. Increased risk to other paddlers.	Able to assess the expected conditions. Able to honestly assess own ability to handle the expected conditions. Ask for and accept advice if unsure. Withdraw from paddle if necessary.	
Adverse change in weather conditions.	High	Major	Moderate	Split / scatter group. Increased risk to others in group. Blown out to sea or driven onto hazards. Exhaustion. Fear. Partial or total incapacity. Capsize. Drowning. Kayak or equipment lost or damaged. Unable to land.	Winds can be 40 percent stronger and waves twice as high as forecast! Able to honestly assess own physical and mental reserves and ability to handle an unexpected adverse change in the weather or sea conditions.	
Equipment failure.	Significant	Moderate	Moderate	Boat cannot make forward progress or manoeuvre. Swept into danger or out to sea. Capsize. Flooding. Risk of sinking. Injury to paddler or others. Compounds other problems.	Regularly inspect all equipment for damage or weak points and repair without delay. Carry a repair kit of vital items and basic tools. Know how to carry out repairs if necessary.	
Reefs and rocks on the trip route.	High	Major	Moderate	Driven onto reef. Capsize. Contact with bottom, rocks, reef etc. Head, neck, spine or limb injuries. Possible death. Risk to rescuers. Damage to kayak and equipment.	Able to recognise and avoid the risk of being driven onto submerged or awash reefs or rocks particularly in difficult paddling conditions due to high winds, surf, swells or tidal currents.	
Unforeseen medical emergency.	Significant	Moderate	Moderate	Partial or total incapacity. Unable to proceed or manoeuvre. Possible capsizing. Drowning. Fear. Non availability of urgent medical assistance or evacuation. Increased risk to other paddlers.	Ensure that prescription medications are at hand and that others in the group know how to administer if necessary. Carry a comprehensive first aid kit. Have an emergency plan for every event. Identify escape and evacuation routes. Carry radio, phone, EPIRB, PLB. Know emergency contact numbers. Have a qualified first aider in the group.	

## RISK ASSESSMENT &amp; MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

HAZARD	CONTROL ACTIONS					
	RISKS					
Seasickness	Disorientation. Partial or total incapacity. Exhaustion. Dehydration. Capsize potential. Increased risk to group.	Disorientation. Partial or total incapacity. Exhaustion. Capsize potential. Increased risk to group. Shock. Coma. Death in extreme cases.	Dehydration. Disorientation leading to possible capsize. Partial or total incapacity. Exhaustion. Sunstroke. Shock. Coma. Death in extreme cases. Increased risk to group.	Disorientation leading to capsize. Partial or total incapacity. Shock. Coma. Death in extreme cases. Increased risk to group.	Dehydration. Sea sickness. Disorientation leading to possible capsize. Partial or total incapacity. Exhaustion. Disruption to trip. Increased risk to group.	Injected poisons. Injury. Septicaemia. Allergic reaction. Extreme pain. Disorientation and capsize potential at sea. Nausea. Shock. Coma. Death in extreme cases.
Dehydration	Medium	High	High	High	Medium	Significant
Hyperthermia	Major	Major	Major	Significant	Moderate	Major
Hypothermia	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Rare	Rare
Excessive alcohol consumption	Able to assess the likelihood of experiencing debilitating seasickness in the expected trip conditions and ability to cope. Take medication before and during trip if necessary.					
Exposure to hazardous wildlife.	Able to assess own requirements for water dependent on the conditions and demands of the trip. Recognise symptoms.					
	Able to assess and provide for own requirements for water dependent on the conditions and demands of the trip. Able to assess and provide for own needs for sun protection. Recognise symptoms.					
	Able to assess and provide personal needs for protective paddling clothing and extra emergency clothing requirements, food, hot drinks and shelter in the expected trip conditions.					
	Avoid excessive consumption of alcoholic drinks before or during paddles.					
	Able to recognise dangerous wildlife and assess the risk of coming into contact with same. Able to apply effective first aid when necessary.					

## **7.0 OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.**

### **7.1 PRE LAUNCH BRIEFING - REF APPENDIX “A” PAGE 43-44**

The standard club briefing notes are a guideline for Sea Leaders and Instructors carrying out a pre-launch briefing prior to commencement of a programmed club on water activity and cover all important aspects of that activity.

### **7.2 PRE LAUNCH DISCLAIMER - REF APPENDIX “B” PAGE 45-46**

Participants in that day's activity are required to sign the Disclaimer form before commencing the day's activity.

### **7.3 FLOAT PLAN – REF APPENDIX “C” PAGE 47**

The Float Plan is a record of the day's planned activity and those participating in that activity. A copy of the float plan must be left with a responsible person or placed in an accessible location at the launch site.

### **7.4 MEMBER'S PERSONAL CONDUCT - REF APPENDIX “D” PAGE 48**

Club members are expected to observe the club Code of Personal Conduct and act accordingly when participating in club activities both on shore and on the water.

### **7.5 CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

Consumption of alcoholic beverages during club on water activities, other than during overnight camping, is prohibited. Any paddler admitting to or displaying symptoms of excessive alcohol consumption prior to an on water activity will not be permitted to participate in that activity. Excessive consumption in this case can be defined as consumption above and beyond the point where the consumer could legally drive a motor vehicle. Refer to risk assessment - page 31.

### **7.6 RECREATIONAL USE OF DRUGS**

The use of drugs of any sort for recreational purposes is prohibited during club activities both on and off the water.

### **7.7 TRAVEL TO AND FROM PADDLING VENUES**

Members accessing a launch site through sand dunes and bush or across beaches must observe any safety warning signs and be aware that not all hazards will be sign posted, particularly if the area is untracked. Members must exercise caution and be watchful for trip hazards such as rocks, driftwood and seaweed, dangerous wildlife and other hazards to be expected in such locations.

### **7.8 ACCIDENT OR INCIDENT REPORTS**

An incident on a club paddle is defined as one that has involved external assistance.

A descriptive report of the incident is to be written by the trip leader and submitted within two weeks of the incident date to the club secretary for discussion at the subsequent committee meeting. The scope of the report should include:

- Date and time of incident,
- trip participants,
- name and paddling experience of injured person,
- location and description of the incident,
- description of actions taken after the incident,
- information on weather and sea state,
- any damage to equipment, and

- concluding notes on the root cause and key learning points from the event.

The President should consider distributing this report to club Trip/Sea Leaders or all club members.

If required for insurance purposes, the standard Paddle Australia “Incident Report Form” <https://paddle.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Incident-report.pdf> should be completed by the trip leader within two weeks of the incident date and sent to the SKCWA Secretary who will forward a copy to either Paddle WA or directly to Paddle Australia Ltd. as the providers of club insurance cover. Relevant maps, trip plans, navigation data sheets etc. must be attached to the report.

## **7.9 COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION PROCEDURE**

The club complaints procedure provides details as to how formal or informal complaints relating to breaches of club procedures and policies and members personal conduct will be resolved. Members having a complaint are advised to bring it to the notice of a committee member for resolution by the committee.

## **7.10 ANTI HARASSMENT POLICY**

The Sea Kayak Club WA Inc. is committed to providing a recreational environment free of harassment, where individuals are treated with respect and dignity, will not tolerate harassing behavior under any circumstances and will take disciplinary action against any member who breaches that policy.

For the purposes of the Sea Kayak Club WA Inc., harassment consists of offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening behaviour directed at a person or persons because of a particular characteristic of that person or persons. The behaviour must be unwelcome and the sort of behaviour a reasonable person would recognise as unwelcome.

## **7.11 CLUB EQUIPMENT POLICY**

Club equipment will be used and maintained strictly in compliance with the conditions and standards laid down by the club committee and controlled by a nominated club member or members.

## **7.12 SUN SAFE POLICY.**

Sea Kayakers are continuously exposed to direct UV radiation from the sun, reflected sunlight off the water and wind burn all of which can be exacerbated by the presence of salt on the skin. These factors can lead to severe cases of sun burn, dehydration and, in the longer term, skin cancers if sensible protective measures are not taken to guard against exposure.

Minimum requirements for protection from exposure to environmental hazards are as follows.

- Regular use of high protection factor (SPF 30+), broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen on all exposed areas of the body. Re-application every two hours or more often when sweating or being exposed to spray or immersion in the water.
- Use of a wide brimmed hat is a minimum requirement for shading the head and neck. In conditions where the paddler is exposed to a combination of low sunlight, reflected sunlight, wind, or spray then a hat with a large peak and a neck cloth that can be fastened across the face if required, thus providing 360° protection, should be worn.
- Regular use of a high protection factor (SPF 30+) lip balm is also recommended.
- Eye protection from solar radiation is essential to avoid eye damage. Sun glasses should be chosen for the protection they provide against UV radiation and must be of a wrap around style or have side shields. Glasses chosen as a fashion accessory will not provide this protection. Refer to Page 11 - Sunglasses
- Over reliance on one form of protection only is not encouraged. For example the use of both a hat and sunscreen is preferable to using only one or the other.
- The primary reason for using paddling gloves is normally to protect the hands against chafe. Gloves however also importantly provide protection against sunburn to the hands which are always wet and therefore difficult to protect with sunscreen only.
- A paddlers legs are normally protected from the environment by a covering spray deck. If however the legs are to be exposed to harsh environmental exposure for any length of time a pair of long trousers should be worn.

- It needs to be remembered that the risks of exposure to UV radiation during cloudy or overcast days are often greater than on days of bright sunlight. Protective measures should not be relaxed in these conditions.
- Long sleeve shirts with a high neck or collar, long sleeves and of a type appropriate to the conditions should be worn e.g. rash shirts, polypropylene shirts, thermals and cags. It is important to consider the secondary effects that may arise from wearing inappropriate protective clothing e.g. heat stress in hot weather.
- The Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF) is a scale that rates the level of protection provided by clothing materials. A material's UPF rating is based on the percentage of UV radiation transmitted through the material. The Australian / New Zealand Standard for sun protective clothing, AS/NZS 4399:1996, describes methods and labeling requirements for UPF rated clothing.

Amounts of UV radiation absorbed and level of protection.

UPF Rating	% UV radiation Absorbed	Protection Level
10	90.0	moderate
15	93.3	good
20	95.0	good
30	96.7	very good
40	97.5	excellent
50	98.0	excellent

Closely woven and darker coloured fabrics offer the best protection. Stretching a fabric may decrease its UPF rating. Many fabrics, especially cotton, have a lower UPF rating when wet, depending on the type of fabric and the amount of water it absorbs. Repeated washing may enhance the UPF rating of clothing by shrinking the gaps in the weave. Old threadbare or faded garments may have a lower UPF rating.

When choosing sun protective clothing with a UPF rating, look for a rating above 30 UPF.

## **7.13 INJURY AWARENESS AND PREVENTION**

### **7.13.1 DISCLAIMER**

The following information is provided solely to raise members' awareness of injuries that may result from the repetitive and strenuous actions involved in paddling a sea kayak. The information is of a general nature and is not intended and must not be used, for medical purposes. While the information contains some suggestions as to recognition of symptoms and preventative actions it must not be used as a basis for self diagnosis or treatment of the injuries discussed.

**Paddlers experiencing any of the following symptoms should contact their doctor for medical advice without delay.**

### **7.13.2 TENDONITIS**

Tendons are tough, fibrous bands of tissue that connect muscles to bones. When tendons become inflamed, irritated or torn the condition is called tendonitis. In most cases tendonitis occurs for one of two reasons.

- Overuse - a particular body motion is repeated too often.
- Overload - the level of activity is increased too quickly.

Tendonitis may occur anywhere in the body but is most prevalent in the shoulders, wrists and to a lesser degree, the elbows of those involved in kayaking. The most common form of tendonitis in the shoulder is rotator cuff tendonitis. It effects the tendons attaching the large muscle of the upper arm to the upper arm bone (humerus) at the shoulder joint. The injury typically occurs due to repetitive overuse in an occupation or activity that requires the arms to be elevated.

In general, tendonitis causes pain in the tissues surrounding a joint, especially following extended periods of repetitive effort. The area may be red, swollen and warm to the touch. Rotator cuff tendonitis usually results in dull, aching shoulder pain that is difficult to tie to one location. Tendonitis in the wrist usually results in pain at the back of the wrist near the base of the thumb. Tendonitis in the elbow usually results in pain on either side of the elbow, sometimes extending down the forearm.

Some strategies that may help paddlers to avoid injury resulting in tendonitis are as follows -

- Learn and develop an efficient and technically correct forward paddle stroke incorporating correct paddling posture, the concepts of the “paddlers box” and torso rotation to drive the kayak and minimise wear and tear on upper body and limb muscles, tendons and joints.
- Seek expert advice in choosing a paddle that is of the correct length, balance, weight and blade type and size to suit your build, strength and paddling activities.
- Determine and use a paddle blade feather angle that requires minimal flexing of the wrists.
- Grip the paddle shaft loosely so that forces on the paddle blades are not transmitted to the wrists and lower arms.
- Stretch and warm up before paddling.
- Increase paddling intensity and effort gradually.
- Seek expert advice on exercises that can be done to strengthen the muscles commonly utilised for paddling and to maintain upper body fitness.
- Beware of the “no pain, no gain” approach. It can be difficult to distinguish when a “healthy” ache due to exercise turns to an “injury pain” due to over exercise.

### **7.13.3 CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME**

This condition may be a form of tendonitis. A creeping numbness begins in the fingers and may, in it's more advanced form, work it's way up the hand, wrist and arm to the shoulder. In kayakers, it most probably occurs due to poor paddling technique and long term use of a fully feathered paddle. The hand that twists the paddle is usually more severely affected. Preventative strategies are as for tendonitis above.

### **7.13.4 SHOULDER INJURY AND DISLOCATION**

The shoulder joint is called a ball and socket joint. The ball is the rounded top of the bone in the upper arm (humerus) which fits into the socket - the cup shaped outer part of the shoulder blade. The joint is held in place by muscles, ligaments and tendons. When the top of the humerus moves out of it's usual location in the shoulder joint, the shoulder is said to be dislocated. A related injury occurs when the humerus is only partly displaced and not totally out of it's socket.

Paddlers are exposed to the risk of shoulder injury or dislocation due to the forces imposed upon the shoulder joint while employing various paddle strokes during trips and training exercises. Strokes such as the high brace, sweep strokes, draw strokes, kayak rolling strokes and various combinations of strokes used while in the surf zone place the paddler at greatest risk of shoulder injury or dislocation when correct techniques are not used due to bad practice or lack of attention. All of the foregoing strokes require the paddler to reach out away from the body. The shoulder on the stroke side of the paddle is most vulnerable when the arm is reached straight out, or out and back, with the hand above the elbow and the elbow above the shoulder, as in a rock throwing pose. In this situation there is a major risk of shoulder injury or dislocation when forces on the paddle blade are transmitted directly to the shoulder joint, muscles and tendons.

Some strategies that may help paddlers to avoid shoulder injuries or dislocation are as follows -

- Learn, develop and use paddle strokes that are technically correct and minimise stress on the shoulders.
- Focus on correct technique when employing any of the strokes discussed above.
- At all times hold the arms in the “paddlers box” position or as close to it as is practical.
- When required to reach out away from the body, in order to make a stroke, ensure that the hands are above the elbows and that the elbows are below the shoulders. The elbows must be bent, point down and kept as close to the sides of the body as is possible.
- When required to reach back, for example in a reverse sweep stroke, rotate the body at the torso rather than reaching back with extended arms.
- Seek expert advice in choosing a paddle that is of the correct length, balance, weight and blade type and size to suit your build, strength and paddling activities.
- Stretch and warm up before paddling.
- Increase paddling intensity and effort gradually.
- Seek expert advice on exercises that can be done to strengthen the muscles commonly utilised for paddling and to maintain upper body fitness.
- Beware of the “no pain, no gain” approach. It can be difficult to distinguish when a “healthy” ache due to exercise turns to an injury ache due to over exercise.

## **7.14 MINIMUM IMPACT CAMPING POLICY**

As stated in the SKCWA "Objects Of Association", it is the club's policy - "To encourage respect for our environment, and to foster a positive attitude towards the conservation of flora and fauna, and the practice of minimum impact camping". In line with this policy the following minimum impact camping guidelines apply to club activities.

### **Camping**

- Practice the "no trace camping" principle. When finished with a campsite leave it with no trace of your presence.
- Avoid camping in large groups to minimize impact.
- Avoid camping for more than three nights at any one site.
- Avoid damage to vegetation when establishing campsites.
- Avoid damage to sand dunes when establishing campsites.
- Do not repeatedly use the same route across surface vegetation to avoid forming permanent or semi permanent tracks.
- Do not leave food scraps on the beach or waters edge, if possible burn them or bag them and take them with you.
- Wash yourself, eating utensils and cooking gear without using soaps or detergents.
- Do not allow liquid fuel to escape onto the beach or into the water.
- Bury personal toilet waste in a toilet pit 15 cm deep well away from the campsite.
- If possible, burn used toilet paper.
- Take all waste out with you for disposal in a waste disposal facility.

### **Campfires**

- Use fuel stoves for cooking whenever possible.
- Use fire places and firewood provided by local authorities where they are available.
- Do not build fireplaces with rock surrounds.
- Do not use vegetation or fallen timber from the bush as firewood.
- If a fire is necessary build it in an earth or sand fire pit located well away from combustible materials. When finished with the fire pit, remove any non organic materials from the ashes and bag with other rubbish for removal and disposal. Fill the fire pit with the earth or soil originally removed and firm and smooth the surface to remove all traces of the pit.

### **Wildlife – marine and land based.**

- Do not feed any wildlife encountered.
- Do not approach or pass close to any wildlife encountered.
- Do not leave open food containers around the campsite.
- Put food and water containers back into a closed hatch in your boat for safe keeping when not in use.
- Do not disturb nesting or resting wildlife.

### **Paddling**

- Be careful to avoid damage to vegetation when paddling through or near to mangroves or over sea grass beds.

### **Fishing**

- Ensure that you have a current fishing license.
- Keep caught fish only if they are of regulation species and size.
- Do not take more fish or shellfish than is required for personal consumption.
- Carefully return unwanted fish to the water as soon as possible.
- Collect only the bait immediately needed.
- Do not leave unwanted fishing line in the water.

## OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Guts, bones, skin etc. from cleaned fish must not be left on the beach or waters edge dispose of this matter by placing it into a rubbish receptacle or, where this is not practical, by returning it to deep water or by burying it where this will not cause pollution or environmental damage.

### **Cross country walking**

- Use established tracks wherever possible.
- Avoid damage to vegetation when walking across untracked country.
- Do not cut any tracks through bush.
- Do not blaze trees or leave cairns or other track markers in untracked country.

### **Cultural and historical sites.**

- Be careful not to damage or desecrate places of cultural or historical significance.

**PRE-LAUNCH BRIEFING NOTES**

Trip Details \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**WARNING - SEA KAYAKING IS A HIGH RISK RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY!****SEA LEADER / INSTRUCTOR - Check the following points**

- Is anyone not a current financial club member?
- Is anyone younger than eighteen years of age? If so, do they have a parent, who is also a current SKCWA member, on the trip to act as their guardian?
- Has everyone received, read and understood the club's Safety Guidelines?
- Does anyone have a short or long term medical condition or illness that could affect their ability to complete the days activity safely?
- Can everyone currently swim a minimum of 50 meters in his or her paddling attire and PFD?
- Is anyone prone to seasickness and will it be a problem today?

**Advise the group of the details of today's paddle activity**

- Route to be followed.
- Weather report and assessment.
- Expected sea conditions.

**WARNING - Wind strength can be 40% stronger and waves double the height of the forecast**

- Expected duration of the paddle taking into account expected sea and weather conditions.
- Location and duration of expected rest, meal, exploration or sightseeing stops.
- Detail any special procedures for open water crossings.
- Detail any foreseen hazards eg reef, rocks, surf, strong currents, surf landing and launching, shipping hazards etc. and relevant safety procedures to be followed.
- Check for understanding of surf zone launch and landing techniques, particularly the "one at a time" rule, if appropriate.

**Check the following points**

- Have all participants honestly assessed their equipment and personal ability and are confident that they can safely complete today's activity in the expected conditions?
- Are all participants qualified to a relevant paddling grade for today's activity?
- Does anyone not have all of the necessary equipment for today's activity?
- Is there at least one first aid kit per group?
- Is there at least one set of spare paddles per five participants?
- How many marine radios are present?
- That everyone has sufficient water, food, sun block for the day's activity.
- That everyone has sufficient warm and spare dry clothing.

**Establish group dynamics for the trip**

- If there are more than eight to ten participants, split into sub groups of not more than five people.
- Nominate sub group leaders.
- Nominate a maximum of four other people to each sub group.
- Determine and state the rules for group spread for the day (normally 50 metre radius from the group leader but may be less depending on weather and sea conditions). It is the participant's responsibility to ensure that they are close enough to the group to raise an alarm and pinpoint their position if assistance is required and to receive advice or warnings from the group.

**Advise the group -**

- That any participant who chooses to paddle outside the nominated group spread or who leaves the group to paddle alone will be assumed to have abandoned the club activity and should no longer assume that the group will be able to come to their aid if necessary.
- Appoint Lead Paddlers and Tail- End -Charlie (s) as necessary.
- Appoint emergency first response rescuer and set up towing arrangements as necessary.
- Check that participants are familiar with the standard sound and visual signals.
- Appoint a mentor or "buddy" for anyone needing one.
- Review the search procedure for a missing person.
- Arrange for a short debrief immediately after the paddle finishes.

**Other Safety Procedures.**

- **All participants are required to sign the "On Water Disclaimer" form before paddling.**
- Contact sea rescue authorities by radio and log the trip with them.
- Arrange contact with sea rescue at nominated way points during the day if necessary.
- Fill in all trip details on a float plan form and leave it with a responsible person or where it can be seen in an emergency, e.g. inside a car windscreen.
- Log off with sea rescue at the conclusion of the trip.
- Send the float plan and disclaimer to the club secretary as soon as possible after the trip for filing.

**Emergency Phone Numbers & Call Signs.**

Water police	- 9442 8600
Two Rocks Sea Rescue	- 9561 5777 VMR677
Whitford Sea Rescue	- 9401 3757 VJ6LQ
Fremantle Sea Rescue	- 9335 1332 VN6DI
Cockburn Sea Rescue	- 9410 1544 VH6CL
Rockingham Sea Rescue	- 9528 2222 VN6KC
Mandurah Sea Rescue	- 9535 4789 VMR611

## APPENDIX "B"

**PRE-LAUNCH DISCLAIMER SHEET**

– To be read in conjunction with the **ON WATER ACTIVITY DISCLAIMER** signing in sheet

**RISK WARNING**

Sea Kayak Club WA Inc is a recreational club which enables like-minded people, as members, to participate in a variety of coordinated, sea kayaking activities where the emphasis is on safety, risk minimization and risk management.

Sea kayaking is a high risk recreational activity exposing participants to significant risks, both known and unknown, and hazardous events that often cannot be anticipated and which could result in participants experiencing emotional or physical injury, death and damage to or loss of equipment. Such risks cannot, in most instances, be eliminated due to the nature of this activity, taking place as it does in an unpredictable and sometimes hostile environment.

I / we whose names and signatures appear overleaf, participant (s) in a scheduled SKCWA on water activity, bear witness that :-

**AGREEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY**

The Trip Leader has, to the satisfaction of all participants given a clear and complete briefing of the expected conditions relevant to today's on water activity and has answered any questions arising from the briefing to the participants satisfaction. The participants acknowledge that they understand and accept that **SEA KAYAKING IS A HIGH RISK RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY** and that they are aware of and have individually assessed the risks that may arise from today's activity and have personally and individually made their own decisions to participate in those activities.

The participants acknowledge that the Club agrees to allow them to participate in this activity on condition that they have confirmed that they are current financial members of the club, they are insured by Paddle Australia Ltd, that they have read and understand the club safety standard and pre launch briefing notes, that they are medically and physically fit and able to complete the day's activity safely, that they are eighteen years of age or older or where this is not so are accompanied by a parent who is also currently an SKCWA Inc. member, they can swim a minimum of fifty meters in paddling attire, they are responsible for the adequacy and seaworthiness of any and all equipment they may use, that they have undertaken a personal self assessment as prescribed by the club and consider that they meet equipment, fitness and skill level requirements for this activity and are participating at their own risk.

**RELEASE AND INDEMNITY**

In consideration of SKCWA permitting my/our participation in today's activity, on the above conditions:- I/We release and forever discharge SKCWA, its members, officers, volunteers, servants and agents from all claims that I/We may have had but for this release arising from or in connection with my/our participation in this SKCWA activity.

For myself, my dependents, my heirs, executors or administrators. I voluntarily and completely assume all risks arising from this activity and waive, release and discharge SKCWA Inc. and its members, officers, volunteers, servants and agents from and against any claims or actions which I (or persons claiming through or under me) may have against them or any of them with respect to death, injury or loss of any kind whatsoever suffered or incurred by me even if such death, injury or loss was caused by or contributed to by the act, default or omission (amounting to negligence or otherwise) of the club and any of its respective members, officers, volunteers, servants or agents.

I/We understand that this document cannot be amended and that if I/We do amend or refuse to sign it I/We are automatically barred from participating in today's club activity.

**PARTICIPANT LIST ON SEPARATE SHEET**

## ON WATER ACTIVITY DISCLAIMER - PARTICIPANT LIST



Sea Leader / Instructor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Activity Details: \_\_\_\_\_

Distance \_\_\_\_\_ kms Duration \_\_\_\_\_ Hrs Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

### **Weather Conditions:**

Weather: ☐ Sunny ☐ Overcast ☐ Showers ☐ Rain ☐ Varied  
Wind (knots): ☐ 0-5 ☐ 5-10 ☐ 10-15 ☐ 15-20 ☐ >20 ☐ Varied  
Wind Direction: ☐ N ☐ NE ☐ E ☐ SE ☐ S ☐ SW ☐ W ☐ NW ☐ Varied  
Swell (m): ☐ Nil ☐ 0-0.5 ☐ 0.5-1.0 ☐ 1.0-1.5 ☐ 1.5-2.0 ☐ >2.0 ☐ Varied  
Seas (m): ☐ Nil ☐ 0-0.5 ☐ 0.5-1.0 ☐ 1.0-1.5 ☐ 1.5-2.0 ☐ >2.0 ☐ Varied  
Surf (m): ☐ Nil ☐ 0-0.5 ☐ 0.5-1.0 ☐ 1.0-1.5 ☐ 1.5-2.0 ☐ >2.0 ☐ Varied

### ***SEA KAYAKING IS A HIGH RISK ACTIVITY***

**I have read and understand the Pre-Launch Disclaimer Sheet**

PARTICIPANT			EMERGENCY CONTACT DETAILS		
SURNAME	FIRST NAME	SIGNATURE	SURNAME	FIRST NAME	PHONE No.
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
15.					
16.					
17.					
18.					

## APPENDIX "C"

**FLOAT PLAN****Sea Leader**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructors(s).**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Activity Details**

Departure Point \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Date                      /                      /                      ETD                      am / pm

Return Point \_\_\_\_\_

Return Date                      /                      /                      ETR                      am / pm

**Route Details -** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Navigation / Data Sheet No.** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Charts and Maps In Use** \_\_\_\_\_
 

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**Communications and safety equipment carried**

Radios Carried

VHF – Call signs \_\_\_\_\_

27MHz – Call signs \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phones Carried -. No's. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Other signalling devices - tick if carried.**

EPIRB	Red Handheld Flares	Orange Smoke Flare	Signal mirror
PLB	Red Parachute Flares	Orange smoke canister	Flashlight Strobe Light

**Other group safety equipment - tick if carried.**

Spare Paddles      First Aid Kit      Weather Shelter - Tent/Tarp      Anchor / Rope

**First aid / medical - tick if present.**

Qualified First Aider In The Group

Doctor In The Group

**Onshore emergency contact.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX “D”**



**CODE OF PERSONAL CONDUCT**

Participants in Sea Kayak Club WA Inc. activities are responsible for their personal conduct, both on and off the water. They are expected to act in a socially acceptable manner according to the norms of behavior usually expected from adults in public places and to ensure that their personal behavior is not offensive to others participating in club activities, other members of the boating fraternity or to the general public and that it does not reflect adversely on the club or the sport of sea kayaking generally.

The following behaviours are of special concern in any situation where they may be offensive to others.

- Use of uncouth language.
- Humour with sexual, religious or racial overtones.
- Personal verbal abuse.
- Personal physical abuse.
- Immodest behavior.
- Harassment of any type.
- Excessive consumption of alcohol.
- Drug use for recreational purposes.
- Aggressive behavior when faced with conflicting points of view.
- Loudness or rowdiness.
- Discrimination on sexual, religious or racial grounds.

It is to be hoped that members will, in the first instance, attempt to settle any differences arising from offensive or unacceptable personal behavior between themselves through a reasonable exchange of views at a suitable place and time.

Where mutual agreement cannot be reached on a one to one basis the complainant should refer to the club Complaints Procedure policy for guidance as to how to proceed should they still seek a resolution to the issue.

## APPENDIX "E"

**BASIC PERSONAL FIRST AID KIT**

- 1 - triangular bandage 110 x 110 cm.
- 2 - wound closure (pkt 5).
- 1 - UV Tripleguard cream 15+ 50 ml.
- 5 - 7.5 x 5 cm non adhesive dressing.
- 1 - disposable gloves (bag of 4).
- 1 - Betadine antiseptic solution 100ml.
- 2 - cotton balls.
- 1 - safety pins (pkt 5).
- 1 - adhesive plastic strips (pkt 25).
- 2 - heavy crepe bandage 7.5cm.
- 1 - universal scissors 19.5cm.
- 2 - Paracetamol tablets (pkt 24)
- 1 - first aid quick reference guide.

The above list is based on St. John Ambulance - Coastal Marine kit No 1227.

**ADDITIONAL FIRST AID ITEMS FOR MULTI DAY TRIPS**

- 5 - disposable probe.
- 1 - Acraflavin 50ml.
- 1 - hypo allergic tape.
- 1 - forceps s/s fine point.
- 2 - gauze swabs 10cm x 10 cm.
- 2 - large eye pads.
- 1 - combined pad 9cm x 10cm.
- 1 - Savlon antiseptic cream 50g.
- 1 - adhesive plastic shapes (pkt 50).
- 2 - conforming bandage 10cm.
- 1 - calamine lotion 100ml.
- 1 - cotton wool 50g.
- 1 - leatherette finger stall.

Additional items list based on St. John Ambulance - Coastal Marine Special kit No 1235.

**REPAIR KIT ITEM LIST**

- 10m roll of 50mm wide plastic, cloth reinforced, duct tape.
- Plumbers "Mastic" sealing tape. ( short pieces sealed in plastic)
- Epoxy plastic cement (57g stick)
- Selection of replacement screws, bolts, nuts and washers to suit individuals equipment.
- Selection of replacement shackles, split rings, pins etc. to suit individuals kayak.
- Replacement rudder components.
- Replacement electrical pump switch.
- 2.0mm diameter Spectra cord sufficient to replace steering cables on both sides of an individuals kayak.
- Short length of 2.0mm Spectra cord for general purpose use.
- Short lengths of 2-5mm dia. cord for general purpose use.
- Selection of plastic electrical wire ties.
- Patching materials for kayak, tent, air mattress, clothing, dry bags, spray decks etc.
- Strong sewing needles and thread.
- Adhesives such as superglue, epoxy and contact cement to suit repair materials carried.
- Set of stubby, flat blade and Phillips head screwdrivers (can be purchased as a common handle with interchangeable blades)
- Bradawl.
- 100mm adjustable spanner.
- Leatherman type s/s multi tool.
- Small pair of pliers and/or vice grips.
- 100mm box cutter with replacement blades.
- Short length of fine tooth hacksaw blade and handle.
- Piece of emery tape.
- Short length of 1-2mm dia. s/s wire.

All or most of the foregoing items will fit into a watertight 0.5-1.0 litre plastic container.

It is recognised that it may not be necessary to carry all of the items on the above list for, e.g., a short day trip or training exercise, the actual composition of the kit is at the owners discretion and will depend on their own equipment requirements and the sort of trips being undertaken.

## APPENDIX "G"

BEAUFORT WIND SCALE						
Scale No.	Description	Wind Speed (km/hr)	Wind Speed (knots)	Mean Wave Height (m)	Typical Sea Conditions	Typical Land Conditions
0	Calm	0	0	0	Sea like a mirror.	Calm. Smoke rises vertically.
1	Light Air	1-6	1-3	0.1	Ripples without foam crests.	Smoke drift indicates wind direction.
2	Light Breeze	7-11	4-6	0.2	Small wavelets. Crests of glassy appearance, not breaking.	Wind felt on exposed skin; leaves rustle.
3	Gentle Breeze	12-19	7-10	0.6	Large wavelets. Crests begin to break. Scattered whitecaps.	Leaves, smaller twigs in constant motion.
4	Moderate Breeze	20-29	11-16	1.0	Small waves becoming larger. Numerous whitecaps	Raises dust and loose paper; small branches are moved.
5	Fresh Breeze	30-39	17-21	2.0	Moderate waves taking longer form; many whitecaps; some spray.	Small trees in leaf begin to sway.
6	Strong Breeze	40-50	22-27	3.0	Larger waves forming; whitecaps everywhere; more spray.	Large branches of trees in motion; whistling heard in wires.
7	Near Gale	51-62	28-33	4.0	Sea heaps up; white foam from breaking waves begins to be blown in streaks.	Whole trees in motion; resistance felt in walking against wind.
8	Gale	63-75	34-40	5.5	Moderately high waves of greater length; edges of crests begin to break into spindrift; foam is blown in well marked streaks.	Twigs and small branches broken off trees; progress generally impeded.
9	Strong Gale	76-87	41-47	7.0	High waves; dense streaks of foam; waves begin to topple and roll over; spray may effect visibility	Slight structural damage occurs; slate blown from roof.
10	Storm	88-102	48-55	9.0	Very high waves with long overhanging crests; resulting foam is blown in dense white streaks; sea has a white appearance; rolling is heavy and visibility reduced.	Seldom experienced on land; considerable structural damage occurs.
11	Violent Storm	103-117	56-63	11.5	Exceptionally high waves; sea is completely covered in long white patches of foam; edges of wave crests blown into froth.	Very rarely experienced on land; widespread damage.

**NAV DATA SHEET** Prepared by **DATE:**

**TRIP:**

	POSITION	BRG Mag	DIST Km	SPEED Min	TIME	SPEED Max	TIME	ACTION/ COMMENT
Start		___	___	___	___	___	___	
L1								
L2								
L3								
L4								
L5								
L6								
	TOTALS							

<b>Min- Paddle Time:</b>	hrs	min	<b>Stops:</b>	min	<b>Expected Duration:</b>	hr	min	<b>ETR:</b>	pm
<b>Max- Paddle Time:</b>	hrs	min	<b>Stops:</b>	min	<b>Expected Duration:</b>	hr	min	<b>ETR:</b>	pm

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RELATING TO CLUB ON WATER ACTIVITIES A REFERENCE FOR TRIP LEADERS**

The following sections from the *SKCWA Safety Guidelines and Operating Procedures* are referenced for convenience of Trip Leaders as relating leading club on water activities.

1. Trip Leadership Categories and Trip Leader Responsibilities: ref. sections 3.1.1, 3.1.4
2. Sea Kayakers Sound and Visual Signals including VHF Radio Communications: ref. section 3.3
3. On Water Activity Group Dynamics: ref. section 3.4
4. Relevant Policies and Procedures: ref. sections 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.8, 7.13, 7.14
5. Trip / Paddler Grading Guidelines: ref. section 4.0
6. Pre-launch Briefing Notes: ref. Appendix A
7. Pre-launch Disclaimer Sheet: ref. Appendix B
8. Float Plan: ref. Appendix C
9. Code of Personal Conduct: ref. Appendix D
10. Navigation Data Sheet: ref. Appendix H